"THE CREATIVE URGE": ANARCHIST PERSPECTIVES ON VIOLENCE, NONVIOLENCE, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

ANDREW CHAN

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ABSTRACT

Anarchists are commonly perceived to possess a pathological attraction to violence. Other stereotypes define anarchists as utopians with little grasp of either human nature or economic and political processes. Furthermore, anarchism is not accorded the same gravity by academics as they give to other political doctrines. The apparent failure of anarchist theorists to match their formidable goal with a consistent strategy is one more reason for academics to maintain their general indifference to anarchism.

This thesis seeks to challenge the currency of anarchist stereotypes by producing evidence which suggests that anarchists are not significantly given to unrealistic expectations, nor the glorification of violence. The attitudes of anarchists concerning violence in revolutionary and pre-revolutionary situations are examined empirically. The ideological and moral consistency of violence with anarchism is investigated by theoretical enquiry. Documentary analysis is the usual mode for determining theoretical and propagandist perspectives. However, this study also refers to the activists who compose the greater part of the anarchist movement. A pilot qualitative interview study is, therefore, an important constituent.

The reader is oriented in the study by definitional work on ideas surrounding anarchism and violence. The novel methodology of the study is explained in depth both to ensure internal validity and to guide further forays in the field. Information extracted from contemporary propagandist literature and the testimony of activist respondents is then analysed for attitudes toward violence, nonviolence, and social change. Finally, issues of theoretical and historical significance are examined. The anarchist experiment with covert violence at the end of the nineteenth century, and the moral and ideological dilemmas concerning consistency are given particular attention.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

The work contained in this thesis was undertaken by myself alone and I assume sole responsibility for the contents.

Andrew Chan

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CHAPTER 1 AIMS AND DEFINITIONS

Introduction

The Popular Conception of Anarchism and Violence

A recurring theme in books or articles on anarchism is the need to dispel the presumed popular conception that anarchists tend to be black-cloaked, bomb-throwing psychopaths who seek to create chaos out of order for their own nefarious reasons (e.g., Woodcock, 1983, p. 11; Perlin, 1979, p. 4; Nursey-Bray, 1992, p. xiii; Walter, 1969, p. 14; D. Miller, 1984, p. 2). Any anarchist is likely to be able to produce anecdotal evidence of the existence of this popular image, from conversations with both the politically illiterate and those with some degree of political sophistication. To use the expression with which Bakunin is most commonly associated, anarchists are thought to possess the "urge to destroy."

The bomb-throwing image of anarchists began in the late nineteenth century, culled out of an agglomeration of truth, association, and fictitious representation. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw countless explosions in the Europe and America; political figures were assassinated in Russia, Austria, Germany, Ireland, France, America, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere. Of all the perpetrators of these deeds - populists, nationalists, socialists, anarchists, organised labour - it is the anarchists who have experienced enduring association. They performed some of the more spectacular acts, but equally importantly they were also the least afraid to applaud, or at least justify, them. Incendiary anarchist propaganda eulogised dynamite and retribution against the ruling class. Nor was the spirit of violent revolution confined to a lunatic fringe; fine scientific minds such as Kropotkin

and Reclus were seen to have approved of the bomb and the bullet. Novelists and journalists fed off the reports and images that each other provided (for an idea of American media sensationalisation see Hong, n.d.; R.N. James, 1985, pp. 5-7). James' *The Princess Casamassima*, Dostoevsky's *The Possessed*, and Conrad's *The Secret Agent* - actually an indictment of official shenanigans rather than of anarchist terrorism (Sherry, 1973, pp. 216-27) - contain all the necessary elements for the anarchist caricature. Lionel Trilling declares the hierarchy and conspiracy amongst the revolutionaries in *The Princess Casamassima* to be "a classic anarchist situation" (1951, p. 72).

Into the last decades of the twentieth century the notion of the shadowy anarchist agitator has maintained its currency. Police, politicians, and media assert that external instigation by anarchists remains a significant factor in urban disturbances (Times, 8/10/85, 1/4/90; Sunday Telegraph 1/2/87). Even some academics have been loath to discard the fundamental identification of anarchism and romantic violence. John Dunn's opinion that some anarchists get "sadistic pleasure" from the idea of violent revolution is derived directly from Dostoevsky and Conrad (1972, p. 12; see also Apter, 1971).

Anarchists are faced with a secondary caricature, that of the hopeless dreamer. This is reflected in two ways. The first is the idea that anarchists believe that acts of violence (bombs, assassinations, or, more commonly in the last decade, rioting) can bring about the dissolution of the state. State socialists in particular are quick to denounce the anarchists' simplistic analysis and lack of organisation. Secondly, and usually from a more politically liberal or conservative perspective, anarchism is dismissed because it is seen to be unrealistically positive about human nature: believing that people are capable of living together in harmony without referring to primitive

aggressive instincts to resolve disagreement. The hippy pacifist imbued with eastern mysticism is a prime source of ridicule associated with the anarchist idea of coercion-free harmony. The good-but-naive pacifist in the Tolstoyan mould is his predecessor (Perlin, 1979, p. 4).

Anarchists and their fellow travellers cannot be wholly exonerated from the maintenance of the figure of the shadowy terrorist. Where the nineteenth century press could point to the bomb-making recipes in anarchist periodicals latter day media "expose" the "riot tips" that are reproduced on the pages of many activist anarchist newspapers. *Class War*, "Britain's unruliest tabloid," positively thrives on the pictures of "hospitalised coppers" and reports of "toffs" being "bashed." The aim of the wild claims contained therein are primarily propagandistic. A great deal of media exposure is generated, members *are* attracted (the Class War Federation, in the mid-1980s to present, has been the largest quasi-anarchist organisation in Britain if not the English-speaking world), but the general conception of the mindless thug is reinforced to the general mass of the population. In a lighter vein, the anarchist press has a certain affection for symbols, which liberally adorn their pages. Amongst the circled A's, the black cats, flags or eagles is the little black-caped anarchist holding a smoking bomb. The maintenance of this figure serves as a reminder that this is how anarchists feel they are portrayed, and has now become a source of inverted pride.

The media image and the anarchist and quasi-anarchist attempts to propagate a mystique are but caricatures of reality. Having observed the anarchist milieu - sympathetically - for over a decade, the researcher has seen little evidence that anarchists are any more inclined towards violence than any other group in society that is strongly committed to creating or defending an idea (whether that idea be socialism, democracy, or the motherland). Given the attraction of pacifists to the

non-coercive ideal of anarchism it seems likely that if such a survey was possible, the anarchist mean would probably be less prepared to use violence than the liberal democratic mean. Theirs is not an urge to destroy, rather it is a "creative urge." Anarchists who are prepared to sanction violence in order to achieve their goals - and that is a majority - are simply being more honest about how deeply they value their ideal than their liberal democratic counterpart.

The proposition that anarchists are dreamers is again disputable. While this is not a subject to be given much weight in this study, the researcher believes that many of the arguments given by anarchists on the nature of human motivations and the possibility of non-coercive harmony (shared by communists) are at least as cogent as theories defending the idea of democracy. That the reality might not exactly resemble the theory does not lessen its validity as a benchmark; again, observe the distance between democratic theory and liberal democracies.

Overview of the Study

The prejudices and misunderstanding surrounding the means and ends of anarchists are manifold. The primary purpose of this study is to ascertain nature of the relationship between anarchism and violence. The subsidiary aim is to uncover how this pertains to the way that anarchists look at the process of social change. Under these broad headings are found a number of questions, the answers to which will be pursued in the following chapters: Do anarchists positively seek anarchy? Under what circumstances do anarchists justify violence? Why do some anarchists reject the use of violence? Is violence morally and ideologically consistent with anarchism?

In order to answer these questions one must decide who the questions pertain to. One cannot expect to produce a comprehensive

overview by relying upon a single source. The fullest picture possible can only be achieved by addressing three fractions of anarchism (which are not necessarily mutually exclusive): theoretical, propagandist, and activist. The theoretical fraction requires the least powers of discovery, being approached through the works of the noted anarchists, their philosophical descendants, historians, and academic commentators. The propagandist fraction, popularising and disseminating ideas, is located in popular and immediate forms of literature such as periodicals and pamphlets. The activist fraction, can only be reached by approaching the grassroots anarchist movement. This study is unique among academic works in attempting to address all three fractions to some extent. Chapter 3 is given over to the activists in the form of an interview study; Chapter 4 examines propagandist literature; Chapter 5 is an amalgam of the theoretical and historical. The novel approach used means that this research was in danger of being neither fish nor fowl. However, in giving vent to all three fractions of the anarchist whole the study may make meaningful contributions both as political theory and empirical examination of a fringe political minority.

In order that the reader is properly oriented to the perspective taken by the researcher the second section of Chapter 1 dissects some of the central tenets of anarchism, and examines the major theoretical divisions which accompany the split over violence. The final section addresses the contrasting employment of the terms violence, nonviolence, and pacifism, that useful definitions for the study be determined.

Chapter 2 covers the area of methodology. It includes discussions on the triangulation of methods, and the constraints upon the collection of data. The main concern of this chapter is the interview study. The use of interviews in this context is unique. Political theory academics dealing with anarchism tend to shy away from examining anything which

has not been espoused by "great minds." The result of this is sterile work (of little interest or relevance to anarchists) which is only ever alleviated by historical reviews. Behaviour may be ascertained by poring over past events. Attitudes, however, are best determined by directly approaching anarchist activists. The aim of the interview study was the production of the richest qualitative snapshot of grassroots anarchists that was within the capability and budget of the researcher. A good interview strategy could produce copious amounts of interesting and relevant data. However, all of this would be irrelevant if the study were invalidated by a faulty methodology. Therefore a comprehensive explanation of the interview methodology employed is given. Chapter 3 introduces the data gleaned from the interview study. In the first sections of the chapter the basis of the informants' anarchism, their expectations, and their goals, are examined. In the latter part of the chapter the role of violence in the thinking of the informants is investigated.

Looking at anarchist periodicals is the most consistent means of assessing the state of the anarchist movement, yet academics have failed to utilise them except in the context of historical studies. Chapter 4 is a study of contemporary propagandist literature in the form of anarchist pamphlets and periodicals. The nature of anarchist periodicals is examined, and the elements of how violence and nonviolence are justified or denounced in their pages are extracted.

Chapter 5 examines some of the historical and doctrinal issues concerning the relationship between anarchism and violence. The first section asks how some of the noted theorists of anarchism have addressed this relationship. The second section investigates the history and significance of individual anarchist violence in the late nineteenth century. The final section surveys the important questions of whether

nonviolence and pacifism can conceivably be revolutionary, and whether combining revolution and anarchism is both ethical and consistent.

Anarchism

An introduction to anarchism must be made to prepare the reader for the fundamental theoretical and strategic similarities and differences amongst anarchists. Disagreement between anarchists over the issue of violence is, after all, only one element of a mass of ideological contentions - possibly not even a critical one (though anarcho-pacifists would contend this). The aim here is not to become embroiled in the wider debates over ideological consistency that may be followed in greater depth elsewhere (e.g., Ritter, 1980; D. Miller, 1984; Carter, 1971; Wolff, 1976; etc). Rather, it is necessary to break open the shell of anarchism and examine what major elements claim to belong and why. In doing this a context for the remainder of the study is established.

"What kind of anarchist are you?" is not an unexpected question nor necessarily a derogatory one. The term anarchist tells questioners a fraction (albeit a significant one) of what they need to know in order to understand the political stance of the respondent. The existence of hyphenated forms is not, of course, unique to anarchism. They are used by political groupings across the spectrum wishing to qualify a descriptive term. Anarchists themselves have joked that Marxism comes in 57 varieties. Anarchism is significant in that the common hyphenations allow for such a broad range of social and economic stances: anarchist communist, anarcho-syndicalist, individualist anarchist, anarcho-

capitalist, anarcho-pacifist, philosophical anarchist, and green anarchist. Nor are all of these appellations mutually exclusive.

Anarchism has been described as an "amorphous" ideology resisting straightforward definition (D. Miller, 1984, p. 2). It is certainly difficult to argue for the existence of a seamless unitary anarchist theory either from ideological or historical perspectives. There is, to be sure, no authoritative text to which one may refer for doctrinal orthodoxy; anarchism lacks a Bible or bibles. Godwin, Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin have each in their own way been valuable, but none provided a systemic approach to anarchist theory and practice. Kropotkin's scientific defence of the feasibility and economy of anarchist communism runs alongside the influential pseudo-anarchist Stirner's elevation of egoism. Anarchists would doubtless find the idea of a monolithic theory thoroughly undesirable if there were claims to its existence. Nevertheless most anarchists would recognise the accumulation of certain features which tend to separate anarchism from the ideologies to which it is predominantly associated: liberalism and socialism. Claims to authenticity of the hyphenated ideological developments might be gauged by the distance they put between themselves and the more fundamental features.

Most anarchists regard the core of anarchism to be a critique of existing conditions, and a demand for their correction. Though social and economic conditions may vary through time and geography, the anarchist fundamentals remain in essence the same. They are dependent only on the existence of asymmetric power, external positional authority and the failure (or inability) of individuals to maximise their moral autonomy.

The critique and the demand can be broken down into the following features: the need for the abolition of the state; the rejection of the

validity of the resources of positional authority and its corollary, the obligation to obey; that parliamentary reform or political revolution alone are insufficient means of change; the development of a society balancing maximal individual sovereignty and the idea of voluntary association.

Not all anarchists give equal consideration to all these areas, or would necessarily agree that all these factors were fundamental to their personal conception of anarchism. Philosophical anarchists have a tenuous position in anarchist circles as their qualified appellation suggests. They tend to concentrate on forming critiques of government and authority while disregarding or minimalising the feasibility of positive action and the creation of stable anarchy. Their critique of the state as an exercise in logic, no matter how incisive it is, means that they are they are often not considered to be "actual" anarchists either by activist anarchists or themselves (this has not, however, always excluded them from persecution, e.g. the U.S. allowed for deportation of foreign-born philosophical anarchists; *The Nation*, 31/1/20, p. 131). Anarchist communists accent association, while individualist anarchists emphasise personal sovereignty. Lifestylists attempt to live their anarchism in the present, while others claim that conditions in the global state system do not allow such indulgence for those seeking social justice for all.

If a core feature is rejected, or one factor over-emphasised to the detriment of the others, it increases the likelihood that an anarchist's pedigree will be questioned by other anarchists. Willingness to participate in the electoral system is one example of such contention:

> So far as we are concerned we cannot prevent anybody calling himself an anarchist. But we consider an anarchist who at election time goes and votes rather in the same way as we would consider a

> vegetarian who is caught eating a ten ounce underdone steak, or a Christian who tells us he hates his neighbour, or a pacifist who refuses to turn the other cheek (*Raven* 14, 4(2), April-June 1991, p. 97).

Anybody can call themselves an anarchist, but this does not mean that they will be automatically accepted by their ostensible comrades.

Human Nature

If some combination of individual sovereignty and voluntary association is stated to be the desirable basis of anarchic society, it becomes necessary to ask why this should be so. Firstly, anarchists do not believe that institutionalised authority is necessary for peaceful human interaction. Secondly, they believe that it inhibits individual or societal development. To say this is to say that humans *can* be ordered creatures among each other and/or within themselves (this sentence looks uncomfortably conditional; there is a very good reason for this which will be mentioned presently). The second prevalent caricature of the anarchist - the anarchist as hopeless utopian - stems from the idea that human nature will not allow an ordered anarchy (see, for instance, the review of Miller's *Anarchism* by Kolakowski, 1985, p. 3). The prevailing western perception of human nature is that of the selfish possessive individualist. This perception fits well with the idea that a capitalist economic system is the most efficient way to extract an individual's potential, and that firm government as a political system is necessary to ensure this potential does not get out of hand.

Historically speaking, anarchist theorists have not confronted the dominant ideology from a single direction; they do not agree about the nature of human motivation. Not all deny the idea that people are possessive individuals. Egoistically minded individualist anarchists simply argue that rationality precludes the need for artificial restrictions on the ego. However, alternative interpretations of primary

human impulses could be derived from historical, anthropological, zoological and philosophical observations.

The most influential voice among the more communally inclined anarchists was Kropotkin. His view of a sociable human nature developed from evolutionary theory in a way quite removed from that propounded by Spencer or Huxley. The zoologist Kessler sparked in Kropotkin the idea that natural selection in fact favoured those who were cooperative in adversity:

> The law of mutual aid, which for the success of the struggle for life, and especially for the progressive evolution of the species, is far more important than the law of mutual contest (M.A. Miller, 1976, p. 173).

Society, he determined, was a natural phenomenon that pre-dated even humanity, and as such was central to human well-being. Through anthropological and historical study Kropotkin deduced that the "absorption of 'I' by the clan or tribe" was as relevant today as it had been in primitive society (Kropotkin, 1925?, p. 60). Individual personality was a recent development which did not preclude the dependence of individuals on the community for orientation. The individualism of Max Stirner or Nietzsche (Kropotkin's particular egoist bugbear) led not to the fulfilment of the individual but the "annihilation of the personality," because it artificially divided individual from community, and harmfully so. Development of the individual outside of community paralleled the development of authoritarian tendencies as a secondary human drive. This naturally leads to the question of how such secondary impulses have seemingly managed to subordinate the primary ones, at least in industrial society.

Some anarchists, especially individualists, have been inspired to look to the ego as a source of inspiration for human actions. Egoism articulates concern for ones own interests, welfare, and independence.

The elevation of the ego above all other impulses leads to the Stirnerian ideal that the maximisation of personal desires is the only reality, and therefore the only morality (see Stirner, 1982, pp. 3-5; Clark, 1976, pp. 51-3). The Stirnerian egoist observes sociability as nothing more than a tactic to maintain self-interest, to be abandoned when at once detrimental. Thus, to speak, at the beginning of this subsection, of society and societal order as factors in all anarchists' desires would have been an overstatement.

If few exponents of Stirner would describe themselves as anarchists, one should not ignore anarchist appreciation of Stirner's elevation of "ownness." However, emphasis on the self-interested being as the basis for anarchy is maintained only by individualists and anarcho-capitalists. Their belief is that rationality should be allowed to dictate the limits of behaviour for individuals. One compromise to the voracious Stirnerian creature is the "morally autonomous man". Robert Paul Wolff (1976) derives his autonomous man from Kantian metaphysical freedom; people have the reasoning capacity to choose how to act, and of assuming responsibility for those acts. As Wolff puts it:

> The responsible man is not capricious or anarchic, for he does acknowledge himself bound by moral constraints. But he insists that he alone is the judge of those constraints (1976, p. 13).

Autonomous man is both the author and the only fully competent judge of his own acts. He cannot, therefore, acknowledge the legitimacy of institutionalised authority over him.

William Godwin believed that each individual was born with a disposition for sociability, a potential for rationality and a certain uniqueness. However, he rejected as preposterous the notion of free will, believing that rational processes were guided by circumstance and experience. Humans were perfectible once their rational traits had developed (through experience and education). Greater aggregate

rationality was in turn interdependent with increased systemic egalitarianism. In renewing the Godwinian theory - though without Godwin's emphasis upon inevitability - Peter Marshall (1989) seeks to sweep aside any notion of the existence of a fixed human nature. "Nature" suggests a universal character, and yet as Marshall and Kropotkin both point out, human motivations have differed through time and cultures. Marshall argues for a "soft determinist" perspective on human motivation - that humans are influenced by events and unconscious drives (e.g. libido), but by dint of their consciousness need not be dictated by them:

> Like plants, human beings realize their potential according to their environment; but unlike plants, they can change the environment they find themselves in (1989, p. 141).

For Marshall the human being is as capable of anarchic organisation as any other more selfish or megalomaniac option.

> Anarchists, then, see nothing in human nature or motivations that suggest order without government as utopian. People may be seen as either naturally cooperative, but undermined by the state; or they are naturally egoistic, and capable of judging acceptable limits for behaviour; or they have the potential for cooperation (as well as the potential for authoritarianism, or individualism) depending on the environment and their consciousness.

Authority and the State

Anarchists do not believe that the state has a right to rule morally autonomous (or social-rational, or egoistic) man. By contrast (with the possible exception of unassimilated conquest), governments claim a right of command and dutiful obedience from their citizens which is best encountered in the concept of *de jure* positional

authority. The paradigm expression of *de jure* positional authority is the ability to secure obedience by imperative command. There are any number of reasons why an individual might obey an imperative command without need for further explanation. For instance, one might reject the legitimacy of the commander but agree to conform because of the prudent fear of punishment (a residual form of coercion); or reject any legitimacy but see the value of conforming to the demand, though this may not be the for the same reason as the commander (individual rational decision). But what *de jure* positional authority hypothetically needs to be able to secure is conformity to a command because one accepts the legitimacy of the commander to make this command. The definition for *de jure* positional authority might be: the acceptance of the legitimacy of agents of the state to command and be obeyed not because the state has the power to enforce obedience, or because the executors persuade citizens of the value of their commands, but because the subjects recognise their right to be obeyed. Anarchists argue that people might believe the state is legitimate and accord it *de jure* authority, but that this is a mistaken belief. They say that the state is always illegitimate and only *de facto* authority can exist. The debate is dependent on the statist's defence of the legitimacy of the state.

The resources of the putative *de jure* authority are complex. Statist theorists argue that authority tends to rest on a combination of paternalism and "rational-legality". Paternalistic authority may be subdivided into charisma, tradition, and divine right. Authority is accorded to some leaders based on their own personal charisma. To some extent they claim a parental role, of knowing more, and more clearly, than their subjects. There may be nothing more to the charismatic leader than a personality that engenders trust and

support, like so many megalomaniac dictators or prophets of doom. On the other hand the charismatic leader may have produced successful results which provide evidence of competence. Hitler's later popularity was certainly sustained by past evidence of an ability to secure positive results.

Traditional resources of authority depend on the idea that "experience and wisdom reside in tradition" (McPherson, 1967, p. 34). Without necessarily addressing the justifications for obeying any particular leader, adherents of traditional authority might defend their acceptance of rule on the basis that what is must be, or that what one trusted to work in the past will work in the future, or that acting in an unorthodox manner will cause unwanted instability.

There are two responses to paternal resources of authority which anarchists and liberal theorists might agree upon. Firstly, that in "sophisticated" societies, turning to paternalism is ignorance of, or flight from, responsibility. If people are deemed to be beings capable of rational choice then they are likely to be the best judges of where their interests lie. By conforming to the will of a charismatic or traditional authority individuals forsake their own judgement, and thus their moral autonomy. Secondly, that while it may prove of utility to obey, without recourse to some form of rational-legality, there is nothing in the paternal resources that obligates the rational individual to obedience.

The rational-legal resource of representative democracy (as opposed to direct democracy) is also subject to the criticism of anarchists as a more sophisticated way of depriving individuals of their autonomy. In simple terms, if voluntarists wish to suggest that representative democracies are legitimate whereas the divine right of

kings is not, they must prove that they have the right to rule. The defence of the legitimacy of the rational-legal resource of authority boils down to the concept of consent. Anarchists do not believe that people consent to be ruled in representative democracies, nor that they are ever realistically given that option, nor that if they were, they should be obligated in any case.

People in representative democracies do not, in their age of majority, explicitly consent to the removal of their moral autonomy and agree an obligation of obedience to the state. They do not sign a compact which accords them fair and equal treatment vis-à-vis other citizens in return for an agreement to suffer punishment graciously for contravening the laws of the land. The Enlightenment's social contract never existed, and if it had, would mean nothing to those of following generations. Nor is the electoral process an indicator of explicit consent. As Lysander Spooner pointed out in 1870, people do not vote to register support for the institution of the state, but rather for any number of economic or political reasons (D. Miller, 1984, pp. 37-8).

As there exists no explicit method of obtaining consent, voluntarists have sought to defend rational-legal authority by varying strengths of tacit consent. Some, like Plamenatz, see the electoral process as the best way to explain political obligation. This suggests that obligation to obey the state comes from the regular recourse to changing one's political representatives. That some might abstain from the electoral procedure is no matter. It is suggested that the very fact that such a procedure is open to use is sufficient to oblige obedience (Gewirth, 1962, p. 138). Yet more removed from any form of actual consent is the voluntarist suggestion that the simple use of the benefits of society demands political obligation. Liberal theorists are not happiest in defending political obligation. The argument of tacit

consent by electoral participation is, as Goodwin notes, "a very strong theory of obligation resting on a very weak act of consent" (1992, p. 308).

Anarchists in any case find unacceptable the idea of even an explicit compact. The surrender of individual sovereignty - for any period of time - to political obligation is a constraint on moral autonomy. For anarchists it can never be rightful. They do not dispute that it may seen to be rightful by the subjects themselves, but argue that they have been fooled, or manipulated, or are subconsciously running away from a responsibility which is theirs and theirs alone to shoulder.

Naturally the state does not rule by the whim of authority alone, though it is certainly a most efficacious way of obtaining compliance. For those not fully inculcated into the myth of authority the state maintains other means of procuring compliance: coercion, bribes, manipulation, and force.

Anarchists believe that not only do governments have no right to govern, but also that they govern to the detriment of their subjects. In the first place their claim to authority is, as stated previously, considered to be restrictive of individual moral autonomy. It abridges people's freedom to arrive at conclusions by their own reasoning and to act on these. Proudhon's often quoted diatribe against the functions of the state remains a useful indicator of anarchist attitudes towards it:

> To be GOVERNED is to be...spied upon...enrolled, indoctrinated, preached at, controlled... valued, censured, commanded, by creatures who have neither the right nor the wisdom, nor the virtue to do so... To be GOVERNED is to be at every operation, at every transaction, noted, registered, enrolled, taxed, authorized, admonished, forbidden, reformed, corrected, punished... It is under the pretext of public utility, and in the name of the general interest, to be placed under contribution, trained...exploited, monopolized, extorted ...then, at the slightest resistance, the first word of complaint, to be

> repressed, fined, despised...disarmed...imprisoned, judged...shot, deported. That is government; that is its morality (1989, p. 294).

The state coerces or forces people into doing things they may not necessarily want to do, or is not in their interest to do. It punishes them when they contravene laws in which they probably had no hand in creating. Its capacity for belligerence is enormous. Its taxes are exploitative. It is the holder or protector of monopolistic capital. For Bakunin this adds up to "break apart the solidarity of mankind" (1983, p. 140).

This is not to say that anarchists necessarily believe that all functions of the state are harmful, nor that they could be done more efficiently under anarchy (though Kropotkin argued this). The point is that morally autonomous beings should be capable of ordering themselves and organising all the same beneficial services and industries without the exploitative, punitive, restrictive side-effects that go with the most benign social democracy. Nor do anarchists consider this a rhetorical conclusion. Spain in 1936, Hungary in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968 are regularly cited as empirical examples of the spontaneous development (that is, in the absence of stratified authorities) of order where a goal was shared by the community (Ward, 1982, pp. 28-37).

Anarchists do not accept in theory that any form of government is desirable, even one touted as preparatory for anarchy. Philosophical anarchists, whose credentials and self awareness as anarchists proper are dubious, *are* the possible exception. William Godwin, commended by anarchists for his criticism of government thought that a National Assembly might initially be called to arbitrate in parish disputes. It seems theoretically inconsistent to suggest that permanent government has no right to rule but that temporary government can rightfully act on "behalf of the people." Certainly the anarcho-syndicalist participation

in the Republican government in Spain from November 1936 was a triumph of opportunism over idealism, given the C.N.T. pronouncements in the preceding months. Provisional governments are a development of a political rather than a social revolution; they are an indicator of incomplete change. This point is further examined in Chapter 5.

Anarchists think that if government is restrictive of the citizenry, it is corruptive of the rulers. No one should be trusted to make decisions affecting other people's lives; no one is considered to be beyond co-option. Even should there be some feasible way of defending the foundation of a temporary revolutionary government, the belief is that it would become a permanent fixture. Governments, anarchists believe, do not legislate themselves out of existence. State power is self-perpetuating if not self-aggrandizing. Bakunin saw that Marx's proposed "popular state" was very much in this mould (Bakunin, 1983, p. 140). Nothing is more of a warning to anarchists of the state's tenacity than the marked absence of any withering away in the state socialist experiments.

Individualism and Communalism

One of the most intense differences between fractions of the anarchist movement derives from considerations of the most desirable balance between the rational being's egoism and sociability: between the liberty of the individual and the organisation of community; and the linked economic question. The influence of socialist and liberal social and economic arguments on the basic anarchist anti-state, anti-authority stance begins to polarise anarchists. The importance of the social and economic factors is such that relations between the hyphenated groupings of anarchists are often at best tenuous. Benjamin Tucker and Murray Rothbard would probably find they had more in common with Adam Smith on

the question of markets, and John Stuart Mill on the question of individual liberty, than they would with Peter Kropotkin or Errico Malatesta.

According to Alan Ritter individualism and communalism are, in "full fledged anarchy...mutually reinforcing." He puts forward the powerful argument that: "Individuality and community, understood as self-development and reciprocal awareness.... and not freedom, are the goals anarchists really seek" (1980, p. 3). Freedom is a complicated concept, and the goal of anarchists has been maximisation of a kind of individual liberty rather than achieving a nebulous complete state of "freedom". Indeed, beyond propaganda and primitive sloganeering there is little demand for freedom from restraint in the sense of the moral-free egoist's licence, or the survivalist's total self-reliance. Autonomous man is a responsible and responsive creature, whose moral restraints are internalised. From differing emphases of this self-imposed restraint develop alternative conceptions of preferable human organisation, chiefly between anarchist traditions developed primarily from either liberal individualism or socialist communalism. The United States is a good example of competing social theories. In the nineteenth century there were to all intents and purposes two separate anarchist entities: the "home-grown" anarchist individualists like Josiah Warren and Benjamin Tucker; and the foreign-born libertarian socialists of German, Italian, East European and Jewish stock.

Before a further examination is made of the fractions of anarchist theory, a note must be made in relation to the to attempt to divide anarchism into left- and right-wing varieties. Traditional left-right spectra are inadequate when it comes to anarchism. They allow the confusion that may label a Warren, Tucker, or Bool both right- and left-wing individualists (Individualist Anarchist Pamphlets, 1972; Schuster,

1970). While communalism contains many traits of "left-wing" socialism, and individualism of "right-wing" liberalism, the divergence is best illustrated on dual axes rather than the conventional left-right spectrum (Fig. 1). This helps to illustrate both what separates anarchism from socialism and liberalism, and what forces are acting to widen the distance between individualist and communalist anarchism.

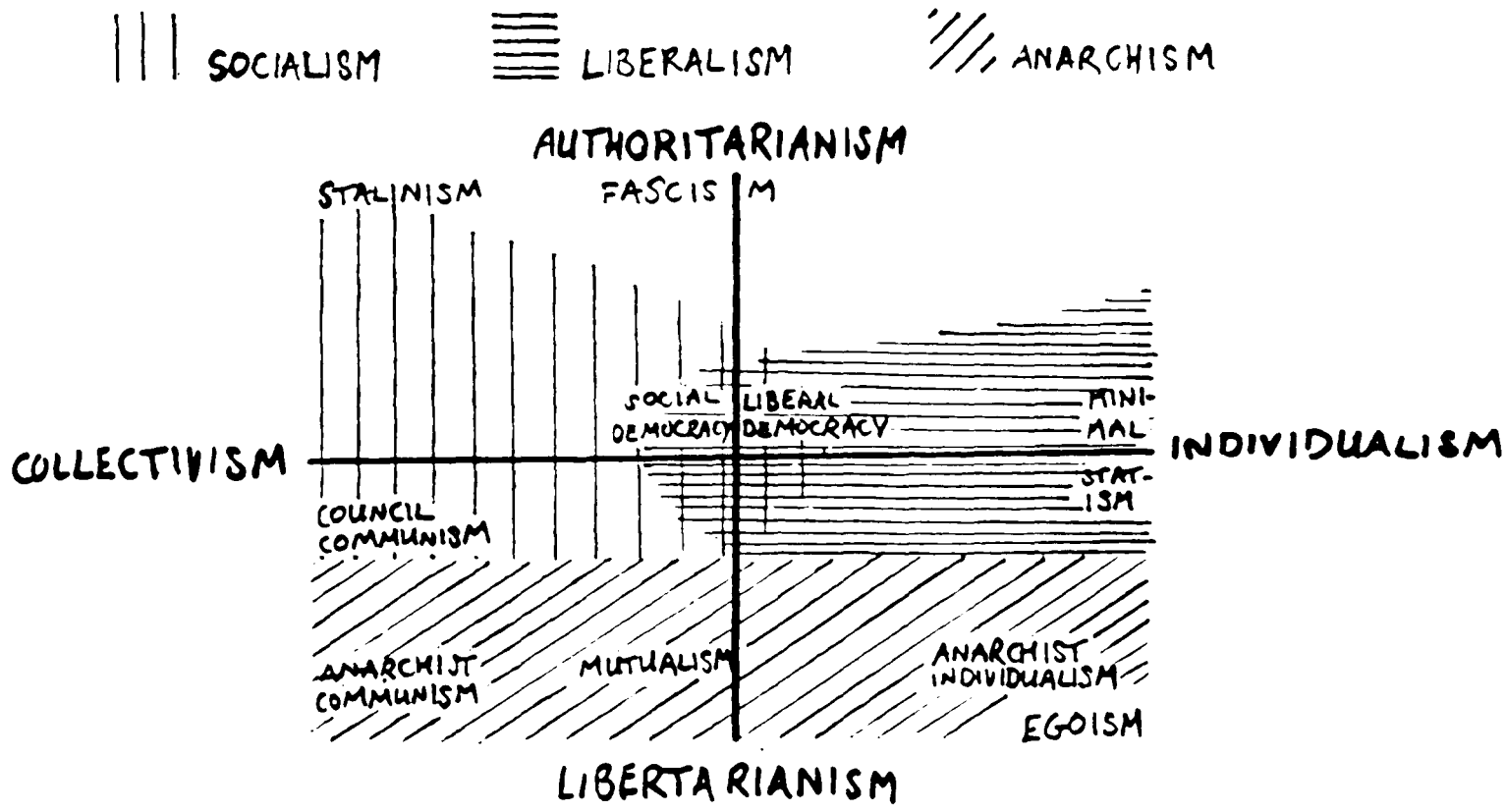

Fig. 1 Two-Dimensional Political Spectrum

It is important to remember that while individualist anarchists may feel a close kinship to radical liberals, and anarchist communists to revolutionary socialists there is a line which signifies the border to practically all political commentators. The most radical liberal may

want to cut the state to minimal protective and judicial roles, the most revolutionary socialist might work for the eventual withering away of the state, but the most moderate anarchist (allowing for the dubious philosophical anarchist) wants to see the abolition of the state, and without a transitory stage of revolutionary government.

Individualist anarchists consider the development of self as the most important human goal. Only by thorough-going non-dependency may the real self become apparent. On the one extreme is full-fledged egoism, the social order of which is carefully balanced on the shaky principle that it would not normally be to one's utility to deprive another of their life, liberty or possessions. To Stirner the only possible social connection would be a "*Union of Egoists*" which could survive only so long as it was in the interests of the individual members (1982, p. 179). It is quite feasible that at some given moment an individual egoist might profit by the enslavement of all others, or the institution of a dictatorship. To individualist anarchists proper it is incumbent that all individuals are entitled to self-development without undue restraint. The community envisioned by Warren was a loose one where individuals were responsive to others, and associated purely bilaterally.

Communalists form the larger proportion of anarchists, both in terms of theorists and activists. For them the destruction of the state should in no way be accompanied by the dissolution of society. Ritter's reflection of Kropotkin, communal individuality, is a good example of the communalist perception that responsible self-development best derives from cooperation with others. The communalists from Bakunin to Kropotkin to Walter see no contradiction in combining an autonomous self with an interdependent community. Decision-making in a communal setting might be made by recourse to direct democracy or simple debate and

compromise. Direct democracy itself presents a problem to those anarchists who rail at the idea of majority rule, or even in the case of unanimity of the suggestion of contractual obligation at a later date. The debate and compromise option is the most secure position for the supporter of moral autonomy: the use of individual reasoning bound by the needs of sociability to come to an acceptable decision for all. It is also the most difficult for non-anarchists to believe possible.

The size of anarchist communities is very much dependent on the participants' capacity for cooperation. The more numerous the community, the more difficult it becomes for each member to participate fully in communal matters, or for the inclusion of individuals who may be irreconcilable over organisational matters; the result being harmful alienation. Agrarian societies are not the inevitable result of this atomisation. The idea of confederations of confederations of basic community units was championed at least as early as Proudhon's *Du Principe Fédératif*. By such non-hierarchic association regional or global communication and economic cooperation become ideologically acceptable.

Capitalism, Collectivism, and Communism

Intimately linked with the social issue is the divide over economic organisation. Individualists opt largely for a form of private enterprise, or mutualism. Individualist economic stances may be derived from three different sources: from natural rights, from egoism, and from utilitarianism (D. Miller, 1980, p. 31).

The early American individualists' economic ethos is described by De Leon as: "The egoism of private property combined with the religion of conscience to produce a thorough antimonopolism" (1978, p. 65). Josiah Warren's "equitable commerce," not far removed from Proudhonian

mutualism, totally rejected the idea of usury, and of profiteering by asking a price for a commodity more than its labour value. Distasteful work might be accorded a premium, but superior skill of the craftsman, as a natural gift, was not for Warren a reason for greater reward.

Though best applied to the kind of agrarian/artisan community that Warren tried on more than one occasion to set up, Warrenites did not discount the application of the equitable cost principle to industry. Proudhon, examining the question of large industry felt that ownership should be shared equally amongst work-force and management, though pay be dependent on skill, experience, or position (1989, Sixth Study). What mutualists find oppressive about capitalism is the unequal access to capital, and inequality of opportunity. Mutualism, or equitable commerce, remains attractive because simplicity and equity appeal to the back-to-the-land lifestylists of recent years.

A modern development of anarchic private enterprise is anarcho-capitalism. The anarchist pedigree of anarcho-capitalism, seen by many of its adherents (including Murray Rothbard) as something of a philosophical exercise, is another grey area. The anarcho-capitalists have a reasonable claim to Benjamin Tucker as an antecedent. Tucker was influenced by Warren and Proudhon, though he maintained a more egoistic inclination. He derived, partly from readings of Adam Smith, a belief that free exchange was self-regulatory when it was free for both labour *and* capital. The religion of conscience had little place for Tucker, and has none for Rothbard. Rothbard argues that the state is the greatest enemy of liberty, as whatever act it performs is an unnecessary and harmful intervention into the harmony that is the free market. Where there is a vacuum that needs to be filled, be it production or charity, entrepreneurs will fill it. He dismisses the possibility of monopoly in the unrestrained competition by interpreting monopoly as only properly

possible in the case of "government grants of privilege" (1970, p. 58). The accumulation of massive wealth in the face of great poverty is not seen by the anarcho-capitalists as inimical to a free society. The just rewards of hard labour and fair competition are material riches.

Anarcho-capitalists do not consider that human nature needs to be adjusted in any way to operate a free market without undue conflict. Individuals in the free market would set mutual contracts to ensure stability, and would quickly come to realise the utility in harmony. Anarcho-capitalists do envisage economic disputes in this scenario. Contracts which are broken or situations where life, liberty or property is invaded may not be settled between the disputants alone. The anarcho-capitalist solution is best typified by recourse to competitive defence agencies, and competitive punitive courts.

Though the idea of harmony amidst intense competition seems incongruous to anarchist communists, there is nothing in the fundamentals of anarchism which conclusively denies the possible viability of private property and enterprise, or the employment of free labour, in anarchy. Only a small minority of anarchists, however, have found this a desirable goal. Anarchist communists reject the feasibility of preventing the reversion to exploitative monopoly capital and/or the development of the defence agencies into proto-state organs. Minimal-statists like Nozick are, for anarchist communists, the practical face of philosophical anarcho-capitalism.

Collectivism is large step away from anarcho-capitalism. Collectivists like Bakunin take up the Proudhonian industrial proposal and set it to all sectors of the economy. Bakunin's central economic principle was the removal of individual ownership - seen as necessary for social equality - and the placing of property in the hands of voluntary workers' associations. He also saw value in the retention of a

wage system so that individuals were awarded according to their labour. In Bakunin's pessimistic view the lazy would not disappear but would have to learn to be productive or else would not eat.

The mongrel combination of wage system and collective property was described by Kropotkin as "incomprehensible, unattractive, and bristling with difficulties in practical application" (1970, p. 126). Anarchist communists in the tradition of Kropotkin, Reclus and Berkman regard collectivism as an incomplete expression of human solidarity in anarchy. It suggests a lack of trust between individuals in a community. They argue, moreover, that the individual payment "according to deed" is impossible to calculate in a collective enterprise. The communist society is one where freely associating individuals maintain collective ownership of property, where the labour and rewards reflect the ideal "from each according to their abilities, to each according to their need." If a stable community supports a policy of remuneration according to need, the individuals of that community must have confidence that none will waste produce, or take what they do not need, and also be responsive to the needs of others where scarcity arises.

Individualists dispute the idea that anarchist communism would maintain the sovereignty of the individual as a primary organisational principle. Communist organisation, they fear, leads to overbearing social-control and/or economic control/monopoly that takes on many characteristics of the paternal state. They fear that individuals outside of the communes would not be allowed to employ free labour, or that they would be refused trade, or that they would be forcibly incorporated.

Communists believe that few individuals will deny their sociable inclinations and want to remain outside the benefits of the commune. Individualists believe that individual sovereignty is best preserved

when people are allowed to function as separate economic units. Both positions fear that the other will lead to a return to statist tendencies. To some extent these positions argue in different directions. There can be little compromise between such wildly differing expectations. Yet it may be pointed out that individualist/communalist economic fractions need not be mutually exclusive. The Spanish anarchist experiments early in the civil war were instructive examples of the cooperation possible between individual production, collectives and communes. Communists may hope that individual producers will slowly drift into collectives which then turn to communes; individualists may hope that commune dwellers see greater liberty in the arena of individual enterprise and dismantle them.

The last major area of disagreement between anarchists concerns the method of effecting change, or the anticipated development of change. On the one hand there are the coercive or violent techniques of rebellion or insurrection in the expectation of rapid or staccato movement to anarchy. On the other hand there are arguments for pacific, rational, and persuasive techniques giving a more gradual change in society. There are moral and pragmatic reasons for extolling both of these positions, and indeed severe problems. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 investigate the question of anarchism's relationship to violence and nonviolence.

There is no paradigm form of anarchism. The adherents of anarchism, whether they hyphenate their appellation or not, may only agree that the present society is faulty, and that the abolition of the state is one of the key factors to remedying that fault. Anarchism is subject to forces of division both internally and from the direction of those ideologies to which it is closely related: socialism and

liberalism. Anarchists fail to agree the relative importance of individual sovereignty and voluntary association. They do not concur over the best form of post-revolutionary social or economic organisation. Nor do they agree, as will be seen in later chapters, on the strategy and tools of effecting social change. Yet while differences between anarchists are conspicuous, these should not be emphasised to the exclusion of all else. Anarchism is capable of maintaining great diversity within its borders. The demand for the abolition of the institutionalised power - where other revolutionary or radical doctrines simply wish to devolve it or defer dissolution - sets anarchists apart . Because anarchists hold this main principle other prominent differences between them have rarely excluded familial interaction and debate between them (where they have co-existed). Anarchists of all hues see kinship with other anarchists. They themselves assert that there is a separate anarchist axis rather than just a grey area between the socialist and liberal axes.

Violence and Nonviolence

Options for a Definition of Violence

Violence is an emotive term, describing, as it does, something that is considered by most to be a kind of wrong. It is defined in a wide variety of ways, often in such a way as to indicate the agenda of the user. The aim of this section is to survey briefly the options for a definition of violence, and then to develop a definition which will not only be effective for the study, but will also be to some degree reflective of everyday use. This is useful both in contextualising the use of the term in the study, and as a contribution in its own right to

the definitional debate. At the end of the section the usage of the terms nonviolence and pacifism is discussed.

Academic definitions of violence fall roughly into the trichotomy that Coady labels "wide," "restrictive," and "legitimate" (1986, p. 4). Restricted definitions of violence are potentially the most politically neutral interpretations. Theorists of the wider definition might stress that this political neutrality simply aids to preserve the status quo, but this is only partially true as I hope to show in my final definition.

A comprehensive restricted definition is given by Ronald Miller :

> An act of violence is any act taken by *A* that
> 1) involves great force,
> 2) is in itself capable of injuring, damaging, or destroying, and
> 3) is done with the intent of injuring, damaging, or destroying *B* (a being), or *O* (an inanimate object),
>
> a) where the damage or destruction of an object by *A* is only an act of violence when it was not done with the intention of doing something of value for the object's owner (1971, pp. 25-6).

In comparison, Wolff's loose definition, "bodily interference or the direct infliction of harm" (1969, p. 608), and Freeman's, "willful application of force in such a way that it is physically injurious to the person or group against which it is applied" (R.B. Miller, 1971, p. 13), are more aesthetically pleasing, but far less analytically rigourous. Restricted definitions identify four factors which, pooled together in one way or another, attempt to separate what is an act of violence from what is not. These are: actors, intention, vigour, and physicality.

The wide definition corresponds to the idea of the need to equate *violence* with its etymological twin *violation*. Galtung (1969), Garver (1981), and Holmes (1971) all display signs of wishing to widen our gaze from the violence of a kick or a punch to that of "covert or quiet violence" (Garver, 1981, p. 222). This form of definition has the

potential to find practically any act or process as one of violence: "violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations" (Galtung, 1969, p. 168). Peace is equated with justice, and therefore injustice - unfulfilled potential - being beyond the realm of peace, equals violence. Somewhat more circumspectly Holmes' "violence$_2$" ("violence$_1$" being the kick or punch variety) considers:

> the debilitating effects of prolonged and intensive brainwashing, or of ghetto schools upon young children, or the continual humiliation and debasement of a child by his parents (1971, p. 110).

Holmes's "violence$_2$" unashamedly mixes all instances of psychological violation from the "structural violence" of institutional racism to personal psychological abuse.

"Structural violence," where no actor has committed an identifiable act, is the institutional paradigm of psychological violation (Galtung, 1969, p. 170). The usual purpose of those who wish to include this psychosocial violation in their definitions, is, as Coady points out, radical reformation (1986, p. 4). The popular perception of violence is as a wrong, and a worse wrong than a nonviolent violation. The answer for Garver or Galtung is the subsumption of psychosocial violation with the narrow definition of violence into a greater catch-all Violence. There is little doubt that they do this with the best of intentions. However, the sum of two reasonably recognisable concepts is a nebulous creature of little analytical value, and easy prey to restrictionist critique.

On the borderline between restricted and wide definitions comes a synthesis which accepts the possibility of *personal* non-physical violence, where there is a recognisable assailant. Audi for instance, includes in his definition "the highly vigorous psychological abuse of,

or the sharp, caustic psychological attack upon, a person or animal" (1971, p. 59). The vigour of any given psychological attack is paramount in order for Audi to concede its inclusion as an act of violence. Others may de-emphasise the vigour but stress the intention of "psychic violence" (Wrong, 1979, pp. 27-8).

There is a further definition for violence based on the desire of supporters of the existing economic-political system to reinforce their legitimacy. *Political* violence is defined by Honderich as: "*a considerable or destroying force against persons or things, a use of force prohibited by law and directed to a change in the policies, personnel, or system of government, and hence to changes in society*" (1989, p. 151). This legitimist stance side-steps the wide/restricted continuum by making the claim that violence is wrong by definition. This is rather more a political adjudication than the moral one it first appears to be. Betz's Deweyan critique of Garver begins by denoting force as a constructive authorised use of power/energy, and violence its destructive unauthorised use (1976, pp. 342-7). Nieburg observes that *political* violence is used in order to change "the very system of social norms which the police power is designed to protect" (1968, p. 17). The significance of this is best illustrated by Betz's example of a robber shooting his victim, and then in turn being shot by a policeman who sees no other way of limiting further innocent casualties. For Betz the robber's act was one of violence, and the policeman's one of force. Intention to harm or type of act is not important. Interestingly, legitimism is for Grundy and Weinstein (1974, pp. 11-2) the "narrow" definition of violence. In their view a definition based on physical harm by unauthorised members of society must be more sharply defined than one based on physical harm committed by *any* member of society.

Thus far the legitimist definition works entirely to preserve the *status quo* by suggesting the impossibility of legitimate government's sanctioning of violence. Wolff's strict definition, "the illegitimate or unauthorized use of force to effect decisions against the will or desire of others," follows this pattern (1969, p. 606). However, he turns the stance on its head by suggesting that as no government is legitimate, acts which Honderich or Betz would describe as acts of authorised force, are still in fact acts of violence. Flexible legitimism, a kind of Wolffian development, contends that:

> Violence is the capacity to impose, or the act of imposing, one's will upon another, where the imposition is held to be illegitimate. Force is the capacity to impose, or the act of imposing, one's will upon another, where the imposition is held to be legitimate (Macfarlane, 1974, pp. 44-6).

In accepting this one posits that the object is as qualified to determine legitimacy as the subject.

Towards a Definition of Violence

In order to produce my own useful definition I will now examine, accept, and reject some elements from the trichotomy. First of all is the question of who or what can be the perpetrator of violence. Whilst volcanic eruptions or hurricanes can be very vigorous, violent affairs, I do not think they can be said to do violence. Firstly, adjective/adverb and noun are not synonymous; secondly, there is no intention (Audi, 1971, p. 50; Miller, 1971, p. 19). Betz would have us believe the breathing of coal dust by miners, which may have future deleterious effects on health, is an act of violence (1976, p. 345-6). Not only is there no intention, but also there is no positive act.

Both Audi (1971, p. 50) and Miller (1971, p. 15) accept as a matter of course the idea that violence can be done to inanimate objects. Whilst not a crucial point, the inclusion of property in a

definition does, to some degree, bother me. It suggests that damage to property should be considered in the same breath as harm to persons. I believe it devalues the concept of violence to let this stand. The use of such phrases as "malicious damage" or "violent destruction" gives a more proportionate tone. It is more a question of intention of harm (or negligence in avoiding harm) to persons than the type of act itself that determines whether the perpetrators of a bomb attack are "men of violence" or not.

Again, whilst not crucial to my study I would argue for the inclusion of non-human beings as potential objects of violence. There is a more tangible difference between animate and inanimate, than between human and non-human beings. There are convincing arguments for the recognition of sentience and, varying degrees of self-consciousness in animals (Singer, 1979, pp. 48-71; Regan, 1983). Harris (1980, pp. 3-6, 19-20) sees no need to include inanimate objects as objects of violence, but does go some way to entertain the notion of consideration of some animals not simply as animals, but as persons.

Some theorists suggest that it is feasible to have unintented violence. An example used by Audi of a pilot unintentionally dropping his bombs on a crowded city as violence, is only partially convincing (1971, p. 52). If this act were a complete accident it would be equivalent to the erupting volcano or hurricane. Violent tragedies, yes; but violence? For the sake of conceptual coherence it is advisable here to opt for Miller's argument for the need for intention, or where the harm "does *not* seem to have been *accidental*" (1971, pp. 16-7). Under this provision, had the pilot of Audi's plane simply been negligent of checking over where he was flying, there would be some argument for his to have been an act of violence rather than an accident.

It has been argued that while remaining physical an act of violence need not be vigorous or sudden (Betz, 1976, p. 345; Harris, 1980, pp. 16-8). Harris notes the "intuitional" argument that violence involves vigour, but then gives examples of acts he considers ones of violence, and would expect others to. Some, like piping poison gas into a house, *do* seem to fit the bill because while the act is not vigorous, the effect is immediate. But others, like locking someone up to die of starvation seem to fit the concepts of cruelty or torture better because neither the act or effect are violent, vigorous, or sudden.

One area where act and effect are separated by a long time-lapse where it does seem reasonable to describe the act-to-effect as an act of violence, is where a bomb has been timed to go off in the distant future. The violence of the act is delayed but none the less apparent when the bomb explodes. I would agree here with Harris's implication (and thereby disagree with Coady, 1986, p. 16) that the act on its own is not a violent act, but the act and effect together are an act of violence. After all, if the potential bomber removes the bomb before it explodes, where is the act of violence? Vigour, immediacy, suddenness, of either act or effect is a necessary qualifier for the concept of violence.

From the above it becomes apparent I reject the notion of "structural violence." This notion demands the acceptance not only of an enormous degree of linkage, but more importantly the possible total absence of intention or perpetrator, or anything violent in the act (if there can be said to even be an act) or effect. Galtung (1969, p. 171) refers to the condition of war-free structural-violence-intact as "negative peace" or social injustice. Social injustice and psychosocial violation, are exactly what he wishes to re-name. The justification for this is minimal given that he himself admits this "may lead to more

problems than it solves" (1969, p. 168). Galtung sees that there is less concern about oppression than there is about violence, and notes that peace without justice is a hollow goal. Hence by labelling injustice as violence he aims to boost injustice's credibility. Neither violence, nor social injustice gain from this agglomeration. It is society's concern for social injustice that needs to be changed, not the terminology.

With greater scope for criticism I feel that "personal psychological violence" is also a misnomer. The "savage verbal attacks" in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* are given as examples of personal psychological violence by Audi (1971, p. 54). The vigour is present, the intention to hurt feelings is there, but there is no physicality. The anguish deriving from verbal abuse can be more than from a mild physical assault, but I believe physicality is another crucial factor which helps to solidify my concept of violence. Malicious destruction of one's property in front of one contains some degree of physicality, as does a madman thrashing at air. However, no matter how disturbing or threatening they may appear, if they are not directed at harming a person they are not acts of violence.

Other examples of "psychological violence" sometimes given include brain-washing and threats. Brain-washing that does not include an element of physicality is an extreme form of manipulation, rather than violence. Threats that involve no physicality are a form of coercion, not violence. Again, along with social injustice, I do not want to suggest that by excluding verbal abuse, brain-washing, or threats, I make these automatically more morally acceptable than violence. Quite the contrary, I believe these are neglected forms of harm/violation which deserve consideration alongside the concept of violence.

There is some confusion between the ideas of force and violence. In the political context force may be described as the use of physical

strength to overpower something which resists (R.B. Miller, 1971, pp. 29-31). Force may be used against animate or inanimate objects: a policeman pushing a demonstrator away, or kicking-in a locked door. Force need not involve violence; indeed it may be argued that force only begins where violence ends, but I will not pursue that argument.

Given my position on actors, intention, vigour and physicality I must reject the legitimist definition that violence is unauthorised or illegitimate use of force. To accept the idea that the intentional shooting of a person may not involve violence so long as it is supported by the latter's claim to legitimate authorisation falls victim to Wolff's challenge - the question of legitimacy. Betz's aforementioned policeman may be authorised and justified, or not, either way his act was one of violence.

When everything is drawn together I am left with a restricted definition close to that of Pelton (1974, p. 4). An act of violence is: *any act by person A in which there is intention (or at least reasonable expectation) of physical harm to person(s) B, the act or effect of which is vigorous or sudden*. This definition is, inevitably, not watertight, but it is sufficient for the purposes of my study.

Nonviolence and Pacifism

"Nonviolence" does not refer to the simple absence of violence, as "immoral" does not refer to the simple lack of morals. In pursuing social change nonviolence is a tool, like violence. The term refers to the deliberate refrainment from violence as a means to a desired end. What then does nonviolence encompass if its prime exclusion is the rejection of the use of violence? A good account of the divisions within the concept of nonviolence is given by William Miller (1964, pp. 46-70). He finds three types of "generic nonviolence": 1) nonresistance, 2)

passive resistance, and 3) active nonviolent resistance or nonviolent direct action (1964, p. 47; also Holmes, 1971, pp. 113-5).

The early Christian martyrs are models of nonresistance. Nonresistance is exemplified by Jesus asking his disciples to turn the other cheek. In this surrender to a persecutor's physical power is an affirmation, and not an abandonment, of one's own spirituality. Unlike other forms of nonviolence which tend to be means to an end, nonresistance can be seen as an end in itself. There is no tactic or strategy in nonresistance, rather it is primarily "conserving spiritual integrity": an act of witness, the physical result of which (execution of the nonresistant, or repentance of the persecutor) is immaterial. There is little revolutionary potential in nonresistance because by definition it can have no ulterior motive.

Passive resistance has a historical basis in weaponlessness rather than religion. It has been used primarily by the unarmed or underarmed to express displeasure at some policy or action. Where nonresistance exhorts one to go the extra mile, passive resisters refuse to go the first. Boycotts and strikes are the paradigm techniques of passive resistance.

As the flip-side of passive resistance, nonviolent direct action, aims to actively effect a desired change, and places the opponent in the position of having to either accept the *de facto* change, or take steps to react against it. The sit-in is an assertion which, if all things are equal, is more difficult to ignore than a boycott. Gandhi argued that the *satyagraha* movement's brand of nonviolent direct action should not be considered a weapon of the weak (1958, p. 3). The potential for social change arising from nonviolent direct action as well as passive resistance is well documented (Gregg, 1960, pp. 15-42; Hare and Blumberg, 1977; W.R. Miller, 1964, pp. 224-364).

Nonviolence may be used expediently on three different levels: 1) spontaneous or subtactical, 2) the tactical, and 3) the strategic (W.R. Miller, 1964, p. 64). Spontaneous nonviolence is irrelevant in the context of this study. The best explanation of the difference between the remaining two is to paraphrase Clausewitz: tactics are the way of using troops to win battles, and strategy the art of using battles to win wars. Nonviolence may be expedient due to military weakness, or the belief that nonviolent means would prove least costly in achieving the desired goal.

This study is more interested in the moral commitment to nonviolence as expressed in pacifism. According to Craig Ihara a pacifist is one who:

1) aspires never to resort to violence.
2) is characteristically non-violent even in circumstances which, historically, most others would use violence.
3) vividly appreciates that violence is a moral evil.
4) acts consistently from a moral point of view, rather than out of fear or from self-interested motives (1988, p. 269).

There are three main resources of the pacifist ideal: absolutist, quasi-absolutist, and strategic. The absolutist pacifist believes that the use of violence is an irredeemable moral evil, morally justified in no circumstance. The quasi-absolutist believes that the product of violence is on balance always negative, and hence its use is unethical. The strategic pacifist accords with either of the previous, except in the context of self-defence and/or other-defence. The moral and practical validity of these is discussed in Chapter 5.

Ethical nonviolence may easily be accompanied by the rejection of other power concepts such as coercion and manipulation. Holmes' wide definition violence$_2$ takes with it the baggage of nonviolence$_2$ (1971, pp. 115-7). Gandhi believed that *ahimsa* (or nonviolence) and *satyagraha* (soul force or power of truth), the foundations of his movement, not

only rejected certain modes of behaviour, but also implied the involvement of agapaic love and persuasion (W.R. Miller, 1964, p. 24; Horsburgh, 1970, pp. 34-9). Horsburgh believes that coercion is not Gandhi's aim "in so far as the struggle is a means of pursuing truth, for the power to impose a settlement does not justify one's objectives" (1970, p. 56).

In practice Gandhi did accept a negative side to *ahimsa* as well as his positive one (Merton, 1965, p. 75; W.R. Miller, 1964, p. 25; Bondurant, 1965, pp. 23-4). Coercion may be unintended but unavoidable in any campaign. For William Miller the simple maximisation of the intention of good will may be all that is possible or necessary. The road to an acceptance of the part coercion has to play in nonviolence, Ronald Miller refers to as the "moderate theory of nonviolence" (1971, p. 41). Going one step further, Cady argues that there may not be any contradiction in the planned inclusion of force or coercion in a campaign of ethical nonviolence (Cady, 1989, pp. 61-2). Manipulation or coercion without physical harm certainly appear available to Ihara's pacifist. A campaign of nonviolence where the activists accept intended or unintended use of power concepts acknowledges the division of violence from other means of effecting injustice/harm by type rather than degree (i.e. *x* degrees of violence is worse than ***x*** or ***2x*** degrees of coercion), a stance hotly disputed by non-pacifists later in this study.

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

Triangulating the Study

Triangulation

In order to extract informative and valid data for any analysis, it is necessary to devise an appropriate methodology for the purpose. A pertinent methodology is determined by a balanced equation of, on the one hand what the goal of the research is, and on the other, time, expense, and capability. Few researchers can be unaware of the restrictions placed upon them by limited research funding and looming deadlines. Similarly, it is a foolhardy researcher who enters a field without any conception of their capability. If there is any question that the restrictive side of the equation outweighs the goal the solution is a trading-off between constriction of the goal and dilution of the method. Too constricted a goal and the research loses comprehension, too dilute a method and the research fails to achieve depth.

Given that the aim of this study is a comprehensive investigation of the relationship between anarchism and violence, the use of a single method could at best cover only a fraction of the subject. A single method necessitates the choice of which form of anarchism or anarchist to study; in simple terms, one cannot study theory, propagandism, and activism with a single method (though all three may be present in varying degrees in any particular anarchist). Each element adds a vista on the whole, the absence of which may be all too obvious. Theorists do not deserve absolute attention. They may have planted the seeds of ideas, but they have little say in their germination, indeed may be entirely abstracted from the concrete movement. Propagandists inform and

persuade but their emotional and charismatic appeals may be distinctly selective. Activists breathe life into theories, but may hold a tenuous grip of the significance of ideas, or act from circumstance and impulse rather than from doctrinal merit. If one seeks a comprehensive picture one needs to address all three, with added emphasis on anarchist activists and propagandism which have been so infrequently and inadequately studied by academics in the past.

The researcher believes that the maximisation of applicable data, given comprehensive aims, demands the use of multiple method triangulation. If a single method is employed there is no positive means of assessing the bias. Each method employed in research, "reveals different aspects of empirical reality." (Denzin, 1970, p. 6) Integrating a number of methods does not eliminate each method's degree of individual bias. However, as Webb *et al.* suggest, when successfully employed, triangulation may reinforce any argument:

> ...the most fertile search for validity comes from a combined series of different measures, each with its idiosyncratic weaknesses, each pointed to a single hypothesis (1966, pp. 173-4).

Whilst triangulation has the capacity to provide the greatest validity to research from areas where a single method might result in questionable levels of bias, it is not without risks. As Patton (1987, pp. 161-2) points out, triangulation is frequently more time-consuming and rarely as straightforward as a single method. Problems may arise including the difficulty in integrating different methods. Whilst this is more likely with mixed qualitative/quantitative research, it may also play a factor between qualitative methods. Secondly, different conclusions may arise from different methods, thereby not pointing to the confirmation of a single thrust of hypotheses at all. In this event the researcher must be able to account for the differences in the final analysis.

This chapter details the different methods of investigation that the researcher chose. The reasoning behind the initial choice of a triangulation of three qualitative research methods - self-completion questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, and document analysis - is given. Given that methodological fault is most likely in field research rather than literary review, the bulk of this chapter is given over to a detailed examination of field methods. The reasoning behind the choice of field methods is given, and the decision to discard one after tentative pilot research is discussed. The questions of validity, reliability and bias are broached. Such elaboration is not only helpful within-study, but also useful to those who may seek to pursue qualitative interviewing with radical political subcultures in the future.

Document Analysis and Questionnaires

Document analysis is the most common and accessible form of qualitative research. Vast arrays of methodological explanation are less necessary for this than for original field methods because the material to be explored is extant, the analyst interprets but does not create. The most controversial factor in document analysis is not how one interprets the data - for subjective manipulation is visible to those who with access to the documents - but which documents are chosen.

Chapter 4 might be seen as an attempt to view anarchism on violence from the propagandist perspective. The chapter examines the way violence is dealt with in periodicals and pamphlets. These two written forms are *the* vehicles of inter-anarchist propaganda (given the unpopularity of public meetings in the present day). Constraints of both necessity and choice were put on the study of the periodicals and pamphlets. One necessary constraint was that of language. Periodicals

consulted were, owing to the researcher's linguistic incapacity, written either in English or Danish. This meant the failure to consult the living propaganda of Southern and Eastern Europe, and South America.

A second constraint was the accessibility to periodicals. It proved impossible to examine all those English-language periodicals on Nursey-Bray's (1992) impressive list. Such publications are often ephemeral, and the most accessible libraries tend not to collect extensively in this field. Nevertheless, a broad spectrum of opinions were gathered from the publications consulted, which included some of the oldest, most popular, and most renowned periodicals in the English-speaking world. One may question whether such severe constraints do not restrict the relevance of this part of the study. The answer must be: to some degree, but not fatally. This optimistic appraisal is based on a belief that if a broad enough spectrum has been consulted - and this was available - major excursions abroad, or linguistic studies, would not only be totally impractical, but also provide greatly diminishing returns.

The chosen constraint was to mark the farthest boundary of the examination of periodicals somewhat flexibly around 1980. Given that the intention of this study was not only academic interest, but also the stimulation of the study group it was felt that Chapter 4 should deal with current and easily absorbed issues rather than concentrating too heavily on entrenched past arguments. Making the beginning of the 1980s the boundary of the "modern era" may appear somewhat arbitrary given the absence of any landmark event. However, certain undercurrents in western subculture suggest this point as defensible. The circumstances surrounding the activists of the 1960s are only *x* degrees more relevant to today's activists than those of the 1860s. The resurgence of anarchism in the West in the 1960s, marked as it was by radical

optimism, societal wealth, and anti-Vietnam war zeal, had by the 1970s collapsed into the shadows behind the "red terrorists". The 1980s signified (for western European and North American anarchism at least) a new wave characterised by poverty, alienation, anarcho-punk, and the "greening" of politics.

The emphasis of the periodicals' propagandistic immediacy is balanced by the Chapter 5's reflection on past events and earlier literature. What has gone before is not irrelevant, simply less immediate. The ideas of Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin are themselves regurgitated in revamped form by latter-day anarchists (who may not acknowledge, or even be aware of their intellectual debt). There is not much new under the sun for an ideology which, while having the capacity for complex theory, has at the same time a highly organic nature. Analyses are developed and revised to cope with the shifting societal facade, but modern anarchist propaganda relies on the same highly flexible anarchist fundamentals as used by the earlier theorists.

Two of the research methods, postal questionnaires and personal interviewing, aimed to approach the study group - anarchists - at grassroots. It appeared unjustifiable to the researcher to pursue a study of anarchist attitudes without attempting to approach the individual activists and propagandists. Of all political and religious persuasions anarchism is perhaps the most insistent on the participation and contribution of all individuals; the doctrine which least desires to leave comment to spokesmen or representatives. Academics studying anarchism have, in the past, failed to grasp this interesting incongruity.

In a study that seeks to discover the way that anarchists view violence and social change it would be paradoxical to start out by failing to consider those who might not have the ability or the desire

to express their thoughts in writing. Their literary incapacity does not make their opinion deserving of any less attention. As long as some viable means of uncovering individual anarchists and recording their opinions could be determined it was considered critical that this be done.

Both postal questionnaires and personal interviewing were expected to throw up different, if correlative, data. The one method allowed the respondent a greater degree of reflection, and the second demanded immediate response, which might either come out as gut reaction or well-rehearsed dogma. In this respect it was hoped that the postal questionnaire might plug the gap between freshness of interviewing and the depth of document analysis. Additionally, the theoretical time and cost efficiency of postal questionnaires was considerable in comparison with face-to-face interviewing; massive amounts of data could feasibly have been collected at a fraction of the inconvenience. A pilot mailed questionnaire study was initiated to discover problems with possible questionnaires and to determine response rates. The sample was constructed from those contacts who were either unavailable or unwilling to participate in personal interviews, and those who were a considerable distance from the researcher's base.

The problems inherent in the postal questionnaire rapidly appeared while at this pilot stage. The set questions, no matter how well formulated, tended to emphasise the areas that the researcher thought important, rather than the respondent. If the aim of the grassroots studies was insight, then little of this could be gained while the direction of the questioning was determined in advance and fixed; the questionnaire left no room for the researcher to respond to the impulses of the informant. When a respondent did not appear to feel much interest in a question, the resulting response was brief and usually very

uninformative. A second possible cause of brief or seemingly inapplicable responses was confusion over a particular question - a typical problem in the mailed qualitative format. A further cause for concern was that while the researcher had absolute control with the questions, he had absolutely no way of gauging how the questionnaire was approached by respondents: whether they spent a minute or several hours over it; whether they took it seriously or not; whether they wildly exaggerated responses or deliberately held back. While some of these problems might have been ironed out by further pilot studies, perhaps the most discouraging factor behind the decision to discontinue postal questionnaires was the extremely low response rate. Of twenty three questionnaires sent to ten different locations or groups, only three were returned.

Interview Method

Issues in the Choice of a Qualitative Interviewing Strategy

The remaining field method was that of primarily semi-standardised and semi-directive qualitative personal interviews. The use of the qualitative interview in this field was both a necessity and a preference. Without becoming too embroiled in the theoretical merits of the quantitative interview - which can be found in more detail elsewhere (Mostyn, 1985; Bryman, 1984; McCracken, 1988) - the value of the qualitative interview to my purpose was apparent. As Kirk and Miller point out:

> Technically, a "qualitative observation" identifies the presence or absence of something, in contrast to "quantitative observation," which involves measuring the degree to which some feature is present (1986, p. 9).

This is not, as they point out, the real value of qualitative methods. Qualitative methods provide the researcher with the opportunity to exploit a flexible approach to work for greater depth and meaning in seeking attitudes. The interviewee responds to a flexible approach with greater insight than can be achieved by the rigid dictates of a quantitative method. In the words of McCracken, "Qualitative methods are most useful and powerful when they are used to discover how the respondent sees the world" (1988, p. 21). The benefits of qualitative methods are carefully balanced by its handicaps. While it provides depth and detail (or intensity), it has no expectation of determining frequency and proportion (or extent). This must be the sole domain of quantitative methods. In effect the interview study trades off the precision of quantitative methods for the "complexity capturing ability" of qualitative methods (McCracken, 1988, p. 16).

There is no argument for a substantial quantitative element in this virgin study. The quantitative element is not immaterial, rather it cannot be a goal of the present researcher considering expense and incapacity. Quantitative and qualitative studies may be seen as different stages in a research field. For without initial qualitative research, a quantitative researcher will not know what to ask. The foundation must be laid before further development may commence. Therefore I ask "what?" and "why?" rather than "how much?" or "to what degree?".

In common with other fringe "subcultures" any future quantitative researcher will have great difficulty identifying the population from which to take a representative random sample. Even in more mainstream social identities such as divorcees (see Hart, 1976) there are seen to be immense obstacles in creating a sampling frame that will provide an unbiased random sample. It seems unlikely that anything approaching an

unbiased random sampling frame could ever be designed given the diverse nature of anarchism and the wide scattering of the adherents of its various forms; no national or international organisations predominate, no national registers of anarchists exist, and police files are no doubt quite incomplete.

The value of field research depends on a combination of its validity and reliability. The emphasis of my qualitative method must stay decisively on the validity side of this "objectivity equation." As in any initial study into a field there is need to set precedents. Comparability is "within study," or set against the findings of the document analysis. Reliability, meaning primarily replicability, lies with the quantitative side of the objectivity equation. As Kassarjian argues, "the reliability coefficient cannot be the sole criterion for the quality of a study" (1977, p. 14). At best one can assuage Kirk and Miller's (1986, p. 72) worries about the dismissal of reliability by qualitative researchers, by thorough documentation of research technique.

Given the relative lack of stress that can be put upon the reliability element of the objectivity equation, attention is drawn to the validity element. The approach of the qualitative interview to the maximisation of validity is quite different to the quantitative method's dependence on attempting to make each interview procedure identical, from the wording of the questions to the physical distance between interviewer and respondent (Hyman, 1965, pp. 30-1; Kidder and Judd, 1986, pp. 267-8).

The qualitative interviewer, seeking to avoid the sterility of the laboratory controlled-experiment style, maximises validity by aiming at greater depth. This is achieved by making the interviewer/respondent relationship more balanced: by lessening the control of the interviewer.

Addressing interview effect is important, but not without weighing its minimisation against the development of rapport.

The potential benefits of qualitative semi-standardised face-to-face interviews over other methods of eliciting qualitative data - even before this was confirmed in the pilot postal questionnaire study - are decisive. Gorden (1975, pp. 75-6), and Kidder and Judd (1986, p. 225) outline similar conclusions: against the mailed questionnaire the semi-standardised personal interview retains the important advantage of great flexibility. The questionnaire has fixed questions which maintain the asymmetrical relationship of interviewer and respondent; interviewees are given no opportunity to direct the interviewer into areas which they think might be relevant, so already a degree of insight is sacrificed. Secondly, the mailed questionnaire leaves no opportunity to notice and correct misunderstandings, to probe vague or confused answers and allay concerns. The personal interviewer in the semi-standardised interview notes the direction the interview is taking and if the informant digresses to the point of total irrelevance is at liberty to alter it. Thirdly, the interviewer may evaluate the validity of the interviewee's claims: whether they are expressing what they really feel, or whether they are trying to shock or impress.

Whilst the telephone may, as Kidder and Judd (1986, pp. 226, 230) suggest, be the modern "method of choice," I am convinced that face-to-face contact remains the most effective motivator for a respondent whose views might prove interesting to Special Branch's anti-subversion "F" division. In this sense the reassurance of personal contact resembles that required by ethnographers who must tread very carefully to avoid total rejection (Spradley, 1979; Hyman, 1965, p. 25). Unlike ethnographers, no minimally obtrusive participant- or nonparticipant-

observation would have uncovered the attitudinal data the researcher sought.

Interview Formats and Interviewer Effect

The structuring of the interview study was the next consideration. Standardisation of the interviews was never really considered to be an option; full non-standardisation (non-directive interviewing) appeared likely to produce copious amounts of unusable data. The fully standardised interview best relates to quantitative research in that it aims to maximise reliability by making each questionnaire identical, and telling interviewers to follow set procedures to the letter. This is an attempt to minimise interviewer bias, and maintain the effect consistently at degree *x*. At the other end of the continuum the fully non-standardised interview is a voyage of discovery. Every interview develops as the interviewer sees fit both in terms of questions and schedule. The value of this maximal flexibility is enhanced detective powers to produce a "full" picture. Inversely commensurate with this flexibility is comparability.

In recent years the most noticeable trend in qualitative styles is the individualisation of technique. Van Maanen *et al.* comment that, "increasingly fieldwork is regarded as a highly and almost hauntingly personal method for which no programmatic guides can be written" (Warren, 1988, p. 5). The interviewing technique of Measor, for instance, "developed intuitively and without methodological rigour." (1985, p. 55) There is nothing wrong with this technique as long as it is fully documented. However, I found it most helpful to enunciate some ground rules as quickly as possible. The most desirable format for the interview study was a synthesis of styles with as few constraints as deemed necessary to furnish the relevant data. Some degree of

comparability was desirable in order to make the study fluent. Given the due content analysis there was no reason why this should not be possible (Phillips, 1966, pp. 110-1). Certain questions told in slightly differing ways at different points in the interview may be adjudged to give comparable answers. Just so long as the variations are picked up in analysis and given weight in the report, if deemed pertinent. What this form of comparability cannot provide is any kind of quantitative conclusion.

An awareness of how the interviewee liked to be questioned was rapidly apparent. Some respondents liked to answer questions directly and concisely. This may have made post-interview analysis easier, but it also have meant the overlooking of valuable insights. Others who rambled, treading outside the parameters of the question, made analysis more problematic, but at the same time provided greater richness, and gave the interviewer an idea of what was central to the informant. Allowing this rambling should not necessarily be seen as a control failure on the part of the interviewer. Limits were imposed on those informants whose interview agenda - the expression of their hyphenated form (particularly one pacifist and one syndicalist) - was barely even tangential to that of the interviewer. Leads suggested by informants' line of speech were on occasion not followed, and questions more relevant to the study were proffered.

The initial interviewing strategy was to allow the use of a non-directive style with unstructured questions, to be supplemented by semi-structured questioning to mop-up specifics. The initial use of unstructured questions, a non-directive style, uses the interviewer as a prompt rather than an interrogator (Kidder and Judd, 1986, pp. 277-8; Merton, Fiske and Kendall, 1956, pp. 12-5). This style was most likely to produce the "Grand Tour" of a subject, linking aspects in the way

that the interviewee saw best (Spradley, 1979, p. 86). Non-directive interviewing is used extensively in psychological or anthropological investigations where the most client-centred techniques are required to produce, "psychological studies in human motivations and satisfactions with a culture" (Rogers, 1945, p. 282). It was hoped some respondents might be both disciplined and expressive enough that an essentially non-directive interview eliciting pertinent data with the minimum of interviewer stimuli might take place. However, given the limited data goals of the research there was never any doubt that a back-up of semi-structured questions would need to be carefully prepared. It seemed probable that many respondents willing to share their attitudes would require a foundation upon which to build. It would have been equally pointless to continue along the non-directive lines of "What feelings do you have towards the use of violence?" to a respondent who cannot grasp this abstraction, as to present a more eloquent interviewee questions requiring "yes" or "no" answers.

It was clear from an early stage in the interviewing that a non-directive approach was not producing nearly enough of the "right" kind of data. A primarily semi-directive interviewing style, prepared in anticipation of such an eventuality, took over in order to encourage the unengaged or reticent majority to expand, and those with a strong urge to discuss wholly removed subjects to return to more relevant areas. The primary tools of the interviews were, then, semi-structured questions. A semi-structured question may be either response free or stimulus free (Merton, Fiske and Kendall, 1956, p. 15-7). The researcher used a set chiefly of stimulus structured, response free questions; for instance, "Where do you stand on the use of violence as a political tool of anarchists?" This allowed the respondent to answer however they please in a specified portion of the subject area.

The consequence of pursuing a policy of semi-directive response free questioning is that the interviewees remain responsible for the relevance of their responses. Kidder and Judd describe the responses to open-ended questioning as, "frequently self-contradictory, incomprehensible, or irrelevant" (1986, p. 249). This is undeniable, but even an interview riddled with self-contradictory, incomprehensible or irrelevant responses may be valuable to a qualitative study. It suggests a number of possibilities. The respondent may have no logical way to express his argument, or misunderstood the questions, or is perhaps expressing a logical line of thinking which the analyst simply fails to understand. Interpretation of confusing data is part and parcel of content analysis. Having said this, the researcher found no alternative other than to use some structured questions, for instance "Can mature anarchy develop within one generation?", when no opportunity arose to initiate the subject by indirect means.

It is common to decry the use of leading questions in qualitative research: "Questions should be phrased so that they contain no suggestion as to the appropriate response" (Cannell and Kahn, 1953, p. 346). Leading questions are seen to indicate to the respondent a preferred answer. One context where this might not be so is where interviewees possess what they consider to be controversial attitudes or behaviour (paedophilia, race prejudice, etc.) and are reluctant to acknowledge this for fear of the interviewer's disapproval (Gorden, 1975, p. 358-65; in all other cases Gorden concludes that leading questions can at best have a neutral effect, and at worst create major distortion). The very nature of being a self-proclaimed anarchist means an express acknowledgment of an intellectual position outside of accepted political norms. Therefore, only when a respondent cannot understand what is needed and the researcher cannot immediately conceive

of alternative wording for a question does it seem justified to proffer suggested answers. In practice leading questions were only used as motivators, and never in any areas of crucial significance.

The scheduling of the interviews in order to fit the semi-directive semi-structured questioning could not be made too rigid. Without being too dogmatic, the way I sought to initiate an area of attention was by 'funnelling down' from general to specifics. Questions on specifics might already have been covered in more general questioning, in which case there was no need to repeat them. However, even the most expansive conversationalist may not have covered all the specifics, for instance, on the role of terrorism. Mopping up these was a necessity to aid comparability (Phillips, 1966, p. 118). An alternative, thought useful by Kahn and Cannell (1957, p. 160) and Gorden (1975, pp. 417-20) in "warming-up" respondents, is an inversion of the funnel. This was not found to be of tremendous value by the researcher.

The final style of questioning considered to be of possible value was, for want of a better word, challenging. This technique involves the introduction of a challenge to the interviewee when there is need for clarification of confused data, or an apparent glaring inconsistency either between responses or with external fact. This was only done at the end of interviews. Clearly data obtained after the challenge could not be viewed in the same light as that obtained beforehand. To do so would be to completely ignore massive interviewer stimulus.

Challenging may be intrusive, but should be seen firstly as an attempt to clarify contradictory and irrational testimony and not as an attempt to change an informant's consciousness. Challenging is also an attempt to ascertain how strongly respondents hold their position when faced with common arguments against their assertions. These take the

form of "What about the argument that says...," rather than confrontation. The point here was not to be clever, to score points against the respondents, nor to persuade them to take a different stance. The point was merely to uncover the depth to which their convictions were held. For a respondent to refute the challenge without logical reply was as valid as retorting with a secure defence, or capitulation to a revision of position. As Lummis notes, respect for one's informant involves treating them as people "capable of debate and discussion and not as...oracle[s] whose message cannot be queried" (1987, pp. 68-9). This style was used progressively less through the study as the interviewer became less confident that data it was providing was of value.

The emphasis of the qualitative method used is very firmly on the validity side of the objectivity equation. However, it is necessary, for the sake of not only of reliability but also validity that interviewer effect be addressed. A thorough examination and explanation of possible interviewer effect is as useful as concrete attempts at standardising interviewer bias.

An advantage of the researcher as sole interviewer is that the researcher understands fully what is to be gathered and how he intends to procure it. Furthermore there is no inter-interviewer variability such as found in Riches' 1929 study on the causes of poverty (Kidder and Judd, 1986, p. 271; though this is not to say that the researcher will act the same way at each interview). The down-side for the multi-role researcher is an inability to stand back, and a possible tendency, unconsciously or otherwise, to be blind to data contradictory to his hypotheses.

A prevalent problem in interview effect is the imparting of too much of the interviewer's knowledge to a respondent. This may not only

be, as Gorden suggests, a "temptation to impress" (1975, p. 51), but also in order to facilitate by giving examples which the respondent may be more familiar with. Even in this way, it was considered best kept to a minimum as it ran too high a risk of intimidating the respondent. Given that the capture of the logic and terminology of the interviewee is important to qualitative research, the interviewer had similarly to avoid "active listening" (McCracken, 1988, p. 21). This is interpreting the words of the respondent and running it past them, as in, "what you're trying to say is...." This, as McCracken points out, is trying to make the respondent conform to the logic and terminology of the interviewer.

The significance of the effect of the interviewer's appearance or style of speech in research of this nature was not considered to be as important as in studies on racial prejudice or social class, nor as insignificant as a survey on biscuit preference. Respondents had to be confident that the interviewer was not from Special Branch, nor someone attempting a hatchet-job. The interviewer stressed before the commencement of each interview that it consisted of questions of attitude rather than behaviour. This emphasis was found to be very important in gaining the full cooperation of at least one respondent, who had stated over the telephone that he might have to refuse to answer certain questions.

Appearance is likely to raise certain expectations, if not prejudices, in any slightly controversial qualitative study (Gorden, 1975, pp. 215-28; Hyman, 1975, pp. 138-70; Measor, 1985, pp. 58-61). "A degree of self-consciousness over self-presentation" is encouraged by Hammersley and Atkinson (1983, pp. 78-80). Dressing or acting to please one's informant (or what one expects one's informant will like) can produce otherwise hidden information (Measor, 1985). At the same time

mistaken dressing-up or down can have negative results. Whyte (1955) found that attempts to bring himself in line with one group of subjects by swearing were seen as transgressions from someone who was not expected to swear.

It was considered a prudent policy in this study to appear and talk as one normally would. This precluded any need to create a front, and avoided the risk of condescension to prejudices of what the anarchist interviewee would like. The interviewer appeared, then, as a casually dressed male in his mid-twenties, of oriental appearance, with a southern English accent.

Crucial to the awareness of potential bias is the accurate recording of the interview. The most accurate method of recording is by tape-recording. Providing the interviewee has no objections, the tape-recorder provides a *verbatim* account. In defence of tool-free interviewing Kidder and Judd (1986, pp. 173-5) say "you will probably be surprised how much you can remember," from an hour-long interview. Equally surprising is what you may have forgotten. In addition the tape-recorder allows the interviewer to concentrate on interviewing rather taking notes or trying to remember the details. This is not to say that use of tapes was problem-free. Softly spoken interviewees were often practically inaudible, and on more than one occasion the tape ran out and had to be turned in the middle of significant responses.

Interpretation, as the major factor in content analysis, is a greatest source of possible bias. One could simply report interviews without interpretation, but this, as Mostyn argues, very much handicaps the qualitative approach's claim to profundity (1985, pp. 139-41). On the one hand the use of a multi-role researcher does mean that it there is only one intervention on the data. On the other confidentiality may

require that no other primary interpretation be made of the interview data.

Protecting the Interests, Confidentiality, and Anonymity of the Informants

In a qualitative interview setting it is valuable for the reader to possess a certain degree of knowledge about the subjects as scene setting, or, as Hymes has it, as a mark of respect for the culture of the subject (1981, p. 124). Balanced with this is a concern for the protection of the informant. Any interview involves what Boruch and Cecil describe as "a depreciation of privacy" (1979, p. 3). Researchers are obliged to treat data they obtain, both about the respondents and their opinions, with respect and caution so that it is not used to the detriment of the sources. Not only is the misuse of information likely to be harmful to the respondent but also to the researcher who may lessen the likelihood of later research subjects responding, or responding truthfully.

An assurance of some degree of confidentiality is one way of minimising the concerns of respondents. Boruch and Cecil's overview of this ethic concludes that:

> the data support the idea that an explicit promise of confidentiality is typically influential for a *minority* of respondents in social research, that a promise will at times be insufficient condition for obtaining respondents' cooperation, and that if an assurance is breached and the fact becomes well known, the quality of research data will be degraded (1979, p. 90).

Mishler argues that confidentiality is sometimes not in the interest of informants, especially in ethnography and social anthropology, as this maintains the researcher/researched asymmetry by decontextualising the data from the informant. By this informants are "deprived of their own

voices" (Mishler, 1986, p. 125). Indeed the option of identification may be seen as a right of the subject (Paget, 1983; Hymes, 1981).

Absolute confidentiality, then, is not of overriding importance in access to data and the respondents' best interests. Rather, it is the creation of confidence in the respondent that information should not be used against them. The most effective ways found to reassure respondents were a guarantee that the study did not cover behaviour, and commitments to protect their identities to whatever degree they felt comfortable with.

Full assurances were given as to the nature of the study such that all respondents appeared generally confident that there was nothing underhand about the interview and the aims of the research behind it. A number appeared prepared to cooperate with the barest of information: that the researcher was an academic, and the interview inquired into their attitudes towards anarchism, violence, and social change. Such keenness indicates either a belief in the lack of sensitivity of the information to be dispensed, or a degree of naivety as to the extent to which security services will go to collect information.

Most were quite keen to be identified to a large degree, though few were keen to be referred to other than by their first name. Had there appeared a problem in eliciting a free flow of information from the interviewees full anonymity would have been necessary. As it was, only one respondent considered it a prerequisite of full cooperation.

From the respondent's point of view there is no way of ensuring absolute confidentiality and anonymity. The respondent should be aware that if he or she has been approached, that the researcher could well be lying about their motive and intent. Restricting the kind of information gathered (i.e. to all intents and purposes non-incriminating), combined

with honesty, reassurances, and rapport is the only effective means of allaying concern.

The actual nature of the questioning makes the process less threatening to the interviewees. While the answers to behavioural questions could obviously be used against an identifiable individual, most respondents recognised that expression of political ideas had less likelihood of police attention. All of the anarchist respondents were openly acknowledged anarchists, and their attitudinal responses on paper are little more incriminating than thoughts expressed in the pub. This is not, however, to say that there is no perceived risk in expressing anti-state sentiments.

The American Association of Public Opinion Research's *Code of Professional Ethics and Practices* states:

> We shall protect the anonymity of every respondent, unless the respondent waives such anonymity for specified uses. In addition we shall hold as privileged and confidential all information that tends to identify the respondent (Bower & de Gasparis, 1978, p. 23).

It is on this basis that biographical information about the respondents will be given. Unfortunately, given that some anarchist groups are very small, even minor biographical information, such as that the respondent writes for a certain periodical may identify the individual to fellow members. No study dealing with a such a small fraction of society, can avoid this without omitting all biographical information (and this, as stated above, produces a rather sterile result). No respondent claimed to be concerned about this, though one thought there might be some minor embarrassment if comments he made about a different anarchist group were attributed to him. On the whole there was little concern about being identified to fellow anarchists, the public, or the police. Two informants actually encouraged the use of their real names, one

apparently because he felt safer being known to the public and the police, rather than just the police!

From the researcher's point of view it is always wise to err on the side of caution. In this case it is not outside the realms of possibility that in a time of unrest anarchists should be interned for words rather than deeds. For this reason, biographical information that has some bearing on identification is revealed on a need-to-know basis. Informants are identified by first name, most of which are pseudonyms in any case. No indication as to the location of the respondents is given, but information as to their group membership is given.

The Informants

It must at this point be reiterated that the point of the interview study was not to produce some kind of consistent replicable overview of anarchists' stances in relation to violence and social change. The aim was to gain an insight into the way that individual anarchists think about these issues, what they think, and what they don't think. The sample, even at the pilot size that was within the time and financial capacity of the researcher, renders details about grassroots attitudes which no amount of document analysis by previous students in the field of anarchism has been able to.

The small sample of apparently diverse interview subjects was made up by what can best be described as haphazard methods (in terms of possible bias), as employed by such as Bott (1971), Boulton (1983), and Leonard (1980). Bott, studying family networks, gained the majority of her contacts by liaising through maternity and child welfare clinics, G.P.s, schools and friends around London. Boulton's study of mothers

sampled from two areas, one working class and one middle class, in London. Leonard took her sample of married couples from ministers' and registrars' registers in Swansea (her home town) for reasons of finance and convenience.

In deciding who to interview the major consideration was less the accumulation of large numbers as the covering of as wide an arc of the anarchist spectrum as possible. This consideration seemed most likely, given time and financial factors, to give the widest divergences of opinion. Thus the researcher hoped to come across willing anarchist communists, anarcho-pacifists, anarcho-syndicalists, anarcho-punks, green anarchists, anarcho-pacifists and anarchist individualists. In covering the wide range of stances it was expected that borderline anarchist/socialists and anarchist/liberals would present themselves. These, along with those who were ex-anarchists, and fellow-travelling non-anarchists were to be regarded as important sources.

There were several ways of acquiring interview subjects. The first, and most likely to produce the greatest diversity was an attempt to detect the national and regional anarchist organisations and interview at least one active member. The British possibilities were: Direct Action Movement (D.A.M. is the British affiliate of the International Workers' Association), Anarchist Communist Federation, Class War Federation, Anarchist Workers Group (later Socialism From Below), Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists, Class Struggle Anarchist Network, and South West Anarchist Network. The American possibilities, given the expense of widespread contact, were fewer: Anarchist Youth Federation, Industrial Workers of the World (the I.W.W. is not so much an anarchist organisation as an organisation with anarchist elements), and North West Anarchist Collective. Each organisation was contacted initially by post, for them to cooperate by proffering candidates as

they saw fit. Anarchist periodical publishers and their contributors, and pamphlet propagandists were also approached. The papers approached were (avoiding replication of papers produced by national organisations): *Black Flag, Green Anarchist, Freedom, Wind Chill Factor, Profane Existence,* and *Ego*. Thirdly, anarchist bookshops were contacted. Fourthly, contacts were established with anarchists in various cities by personal enquiry.

The sample size of seventeen is not impressive compared to those found in survey research. However, it must be kept in mind that this pilot qualitative work aims at capturing particular detail rather than quantity. Boulton's sample of fifty, Bott's of twenty families, or Leonard's of fifty couples, are insignificant in percentage terms, but this is irrelevant to the goals of their studies which were to produce internally valid analyses, not replicable representations.

One need not, in any case, be too worried by the size of the sample. The quasi-anarchist *Class War* has in the past claimed a readership of up to 12,000 (*This is Class War*, 1991, p. 4), *Green Anarchist* something around 2,000, *Direct Action* has 500-1000. At a generous guesstimate there are perhaps 20,000 people in Britain today who might call themselves anarchists (though for many this might be little more than an attractive label). Estimates for North America are more difficult to ascertain. One of the few reasonably reliable figures I could find being the I.W.W.'s membership of 1,200 in 1989 (Loving, 1989, p. 27). Given such small numbers seventeen is not an negligible sample.

The sample that eventually emerged contains the diversity necessary to justify it. At least one member of each of the existing British national organisations was a source, and several of the informants sought to be interviewed as representatives of their

organisation rather than solely as individuals. Of the fifteen self-declared anarchist respondents, there were two anarcho-syndicalists (Albert and Alan), one class struggle anarchist (Rob), one anarchist-communist (Kevin), four were anarcho-pacifists (Tom, John, Eric, and Seamus), and one a green anarchist (Phil). Six did not hyphenate themselves (Ian, Biff, Harvey, Jim, Brendan, and Neil). In addition there were two ex-anarchist informants, one having drifted towards a more Marxist oriented libertarian communism (Alex) and the other firmly ensconced in egoism (Stan). The respondents varied in age from the veteran (Albert), to the middle-aged (Kevin, John), to twenties (Alan, Brendan), to teens (Neil, Ian). Due to financial constraints all of the respondents came from Britain or the U.S. Unfortunately neither of the two female contacts were eventually interviewed, one because of unavailability and the other because she did not think she had much to say on the issue.

One can only provide an informed guess as to how representative this combination is. The preliminary report of a *Freedom* readership survey (9/1/93; keeping in mind the more high-brow/stuffy reputation of *Freedom*) found that of the 79 respondents who deemed themselves anarchists (out of the first one hundred), 21 called themselves anarchist-communists, 14 green anarchists, 7 anarcho-pacifists, 12 anarcho-syndicalists, and 13 individualists. Only 5 were women. My own experience would lead me to believe that an over-representative number of anarcho-pacifists and an under-representative number of anarchist communists have been consulted for the present study. But again, this has only a minor bearing on the production of the qualitative data sought.

Out of those I hoped to be able to contact and interview there are a few notable omissions. The Class Struggle Anarchist Network collapsed

in the course of the research through lack of activism. The leading activist, while initially keen to cooperate, moved out of active anarchist politics before an interview was finalised. The South West Anarchist Network, Anarchist Youth Federation, and Industrial Workers of the World failed to respond beyond initial contact. The most significant failure was successful contact with individualist anarchists. Given their tendency not to identify with groups, plus their minority status and a particularly low profile in Britain, the procuring of an individualist had not seemed very likely at the beginning of the search. No British periodical that the researcher came across took an individualistic editorial line (the producer of the small irregular *Minus One* and *Ego* had actually abandoned anarchism for non-anarchist egoism); a less thorough investigation of American series found none that did not fit more comfortably with philosophical anarchism, green anarchism, or anarcho-capitalism. One self-proclaimed individualist anarchist did agree to be interviewed (one of only two females contacted) but was unavailable at any convenient time.

The two most notable (i.e. published) anarcho-pacifists approached refused to be interviewed for different reasons. One felt that interviews left "far too much scope for misunderstanding"; the second was chronically ill and thus unavailable. The producers of *Freedom* and staff of the Freedom Bookshop although proving helpful in other ways, did not render any interviews. Several letters produced no reply, and on a personal visit to the bookshop one of their veterans refused on the grounds that a subsection in one of his books said all that he had to say on the subject. The only philosophical anarchist approached also declined because, as might be expected, he felt he didn't have much to say on the matter.

From the omissions that have been forced upon the interview study perhaps the most valuable observation is that the most intellectual, literature-minded anarchists have been the least willing to be interviewed. They have been able to point to their own writings on the subject as substitute, and some have expressed perhaps justified anxiety about corruption of these expressions in interviews. Faced with these omissions, the researcher must estimate how compromised the interview study is. In order to calculate the importance of the omissions one goes back to the two purposes of the interview study: to cover as broad a swathe as possible from the anarchist spectrum to provide the opportunity for insight from as many positions as possible; and also to give expression to those anarchists whose views are not normally aired.

Inevitably one has to say that the fullest coverage of the anarchist spectrum has not been achieved. This refers not only to individualist anarchists, but also to other permutations such as pan-destructionists. In defence it must be remarked that only massive resources of time and money, unavailable to the present researcher, could have changed this situation. The reader must be aware of this flaw, but also that it is not a fatal one.

The interview study as a snapshot of contemporary anarchist opinion gives a taste of what exists at the grassroots level. The shortcoming that this snapshot does not get everyone in the picture is ameliorated by the probability that the linkage to primary literature in the shape of periodicals and pamphlets will go some way to covering the missing areas. It is perhaps lucky that the least easy to find are (though not exclusively so) the more cerebral anarchists who have produced a healthy amount of literature.

CHAPTER 3 INTERVIEW STUDY

The Basis of the Informants' Anarchism

When asked to summarise what anarchism signified for them, the themes that emerged from the respondents polarised around the areas of environmentalism, working class empowerment, and social and economic justice. The initial two themes maintained extremely partisan support between on the one hand the "greener" interviewees, and on the other the workerists. These two tendencies did not appear to share their supporters to any significant degree. Indeed there was a noticeable degree of mutual disapproval. The environmentally-minded respondents berated class-minded workerists for maintaining an ideology based on the expectation of progressive economic expansion and infinite resources; the workerist informants chided green anarchists for turning their back on capitalism rather than confronting it, and trying to return to a mythical harmonious rustic past.

Recent years have seen a considerable degree of intellectual and activist traffic flowing both ways between anarchism and environmentalism. Interest in environmentalism may be a relatively modern anarchist phenomenon, but easily follows in the more idealist anarchist tradition. Many of the mid to late twentieth century social questions have drawn in anarchists not entirely convinced by the workerist argument that class struggle is the essence of anarchism. Anarchists have been heavily involved in the anti-nuclear movement from the 1950s to the 1980s, in feminism, and the animal rights movement. The most recent hyphenation, green anarchism, is a combination of anti-consumerism, environmentalism, and lifestylism, with the belief that the eco-crisis is best resolved by a devolved anarchist mode:

> As I see it, at the moment, everything revolves around ...compelling everyone to work for forty hours a week. Many are in rather menial jobs and there's no satisfaction in the work that they're doing. And the end products, really, is a lot of mass-produced rubbish.... And I really think that people's talents and energy ought to be sort of utilised into an area that creates things of real worth and value (Tom).
>
> Basically I don't see a society which is hierarchic...and which sees things as, like, objects to be exploited, whether they be people, animals, or the earth, is a viable or sustainable one (Phil).

The particular anarchist solution expressed by the green interviewees was vocally divergent from that of the workerist mainstream. Capitalism was not to be seen as the root of all evil, rather, any form of mass society:

> I think that... for me it's a case of perhaps going back in time slightly ... to an era or some sort of period when people were valued more than they are today (Tom).
>
> ... by maintaining a system of mass production you maintain a system of mass, and that means you have to maintain a system of hierarchical control over it. That's simple, basic, and obvious managerial fact. We have to get rid of the mass society that makes exploitation inevitable. And basically that's where *Green Anarchist* would differ from the majority of other perspectives advanced in the anarchist milieu today (Phil).
>
> ... a lot of the classic anarchism is derived from nineteenth century myths of progress and technological advancement which necessitates a broad base of resources to maintain it and maintain the diversity of goods available to it. Clearly such production has to be coordinated, and that requires coordinators, and that in turn requires a hierarchy. And that is intrinsically anti-anarchist (Phil).
>
> ...the assumption is that the only problem with the existing society is that capitalists control it. That's not good enough. As I say, you're looking at irrevocable changes in the atmosphere within the next decade. That's a direct product of the existing means of production, whether controlled by capitalists or not (Phil).

The workerist respondents, anarcho-syndicalists and class struggle anarchists, perceived their anarchism as part of the historic tradition of that part of anarchism which parallels revolutionary socialism. Alan, who moved from a Labour Party background to anarcho-syndicalism, and Rob who drifted from the Revolutionary Communist Party to Class War shared

the eventual goal of revolutionary socialists and communists, but rejecting their vanguardism as patronisingly unnecessary. The workerists, then, saw anarchism as the best solution to working class subjugation under capitalism:

> Class struggle means you ... look at the distribution of wealth and power in society.... Some people are very rich and powerful, and some are very poor and have no power and control over their own lives (Rob).

> I think nowadays I'd see my attachment to anarchism as being more to do with the insistence it puts on workers themselves making social change, rather than my attachment to anarchism as previously, simply being an expression of far-left politics (Alan).

The workerist informants caricatured the more environmentally-minded anarchists as Luddites trying to turn back the hands of time: You get people like the green anarchists who are virtual fascists, who want to destroy machinery" (Rob). To some extent this criticism reflects the embarrassment the workerists feel at the Marxist characterisation of the anarchist as a backward-looking petit-bourgeois.

The appeal of anarchism as a means of redressing social and economic injustice encompassed the range of respondents, not least those whose agendas were not ultimately tied to environmental or class issues. Anarchism was seen by the respondents as a solution to practically all the asymmetries existing under the present order of things, be it economic imbalance, lack of educational opportunity, racism, sexism, or speciesism:

> I'm an anarchist because I've always looked round the world and there's a lot of things wrong with this place (Rob).

> ...it's a loose commitment to social justice, a commitment to the idea of community, a commitment to the idea of equality - though that needs to be qualified - and freedom (Kevin).

> Why I'm an anarchist is because I want to see a world in which human beings can achieve their full humanity, in the sense of...being fully formed (Kevin).

> I was brought up...I suppose, with a strong leaning towards social

> justice. That is, the rights of the working class, the poor, to take what they could to improve their lot (Alan).

The desire to see a just end is tempered, at least in one case, by an appeal to love of fellow being, and persuasive and just *means*: "I think the essential components of anarchism is...are the areas of compassion and caring" (Tom).

The Informants' Expectations and Goals

With the failure of the researcher to interview a self-proclaimed philosophical anarchist, it was no surprise to find that all the respondents registered a belief in the feasibility of a mature anarchic society (mature in the sense of conforming to an acceptable degree to the ideal form of the respondent). The one interviewee who expressed mixed opinions on this question was also, inconsistently, sceptical about the capacity of human sociability. The failure of conscious revolutionaries to maintain their level of commitment permanently, and the apparent lack of concern amongst ordinary people about issues of global importance meant to him an uncertainty over the ability of humanity to throw off the shackles of irresponsibility and selfishness.

All but one of the respondents who expressed an opinion believed there was value in discussing the necessary pre-conditions for social transformation (the process of massive societal rearrangement). The one dissenter dismissed such discussion as idle speculation. Otherwise there was agreement that the kind of major dislocations that have sparked the principal twentieth century revolutions would produce only more disappointment unless the people favoured anarchy. People would want anarchy when they came to a "realisation," became "conscious," or were "educated." There was an informal idealist/materialist division over

whether consciousness could best be raised by example or experience. The differences mostly formed over whether people's realisation would come more from the acceptance of anarchist ideology regardless of the material conditions, or from material conditions forcing people to look for a better way of living. The people who needed to undergo this realisation were variously described as "the working class," "the poor," "the vast majority," or "people." In all circumstances the respondents indicated that the vast majority of the population - on a global if not national scale - required a change in consciousness if revolutionary change was to be secured.

The most positive appraisals of the likelihood of social transformation were heard from the partisans of environmental necessity and working class potency. The argument posited by Phil that anarchy was likely within a definite timescale was tempered by his belief that humanity faced the choice of anarchy or chaos:

> *Interviewer: Do you see the development of a social revolution within your lifetime?*
> Phil: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, as far as I can see it, either we're going to have a situation of complete social chaos when the resources...sorry, allocation of resources breaks down and becomes blatantly inegalitarian, or people are gonna take control of the production of their own resources as a way of preventing that. One way or another it's gonna happen within the next thirty years.

This view was consistent with Phil's belief in the auto-destructiveness of the prevailing economic norms. With the above exception, none of the other respondents looked at present conditions and found anything to be particularly positive about. Even the two other respondents hopeful of change in the foreseeable future were optimistic only in as much as they could marginalise present material indicators. Two supporters of the D.A.M. gave positive responses:

> I think it's always been possible within a year or two. It's always been possible (Albert).
>
> I think in my lifetime it's quite practical we'll have a social

> revolution; we'll get rid of capitalism, and we'll live in a society that is run by the workers (Alan).

No explanation was forthcoming from Alan for his optimism. His statement simply reflected a tacit faith in the working class that is apparent throughout his responses. Where several respondents sought to emphasise their pessimism because of the obvious present weakness of anarchists, or working class disinterest in revolutionary issues, Alan put forward an optimism founded not on material conditions, but rather on the revolutionary potential of the proletariat. Similarly, the reason why revolution has always been possible for Albert is because the working class has been, and still is, in a constant struggle with the ruling class.

Several of the respondents who could not foresee a move towards the development of anarchism noted that their judgement was based on the likelihood of continuity between present and future conditions. While hoping to appear realistic in the face of empirical evidence, they did not close the door entirely on the possibility of rapid unforeseen circumstances taking a hand in creating massive instability. Three of the respondents noted the possibility of economic crisis. Unlike Phil they did not express this crisis in terms of an inevitable environmental time-bomb. Rather, they saw it as part of the boom-slump cycle gone out of control:

> *Interviewer: Do you foresee the development of a social revolution in the near future?*
> Kevin: If I was to be honest I would say no.... No...who can say? I mean, Lenin himself - I think - said in 1916 that he didn't expect to see a revolution in his lifetime, and fortunately - perhaps unfortunately - he was wrong. I don't know. I think how we perceive the situation is...is a real deepening of economic, social, and political problems in Britain.... Whether that would bring about the social revolution is difficult to say.

> *Interviewer: Do you foresee the development of a social revolution in the near future?*
> Rob: Ooh. It depends how bad things get.... Revolutions only happen when people are literally having bread riots. It's only then that they've realised that they've got nothing left to

> lose.... Things aren't near bread riots in this country, but they are getting pretty run down here.

While they dare not believe that revolutionary social change will begin in their lifetimes, they are careful to peruse local and global events for evidence of the emergence of revolutionary conditions. While the traditional indicator, economic stability, predominates the discussion, one informant cast the net somewhat wider:

> *Interviewer: Do you foresee the development of a social revolution leading to anarchy in the near future?*
> Eric: Only if things get much worse. Nuclear catastrophe, severe energy crisis, AIDS...

Eric's anarcho-pacifist stance toward imminent revolutionary change was very negative. In the foreseeable future, given that people were unlikely to have been persuaded of the rationality and compassion of anarchism, only massive dislocation, death, and destruction could herald primitive anarchy. The tenor of his responses indicated he did not look on any such accelerated path with relish. Although anarcho-pacifists eschew the traditional conception of revolutionary upheaval, this does not mean that they all reject entirely the possibility of the commencement of a path of radical change presently. One anarcho-pacifist respondent did not discount social revolution - the gradual supersession of state by counter-culture, as he saw it - in his lifetime (John).

The remaining respondents expressed no doubt that the social revolution was not going to happen soon:

> *Interviewer: Can you foresee the social revolution in the near future?*
> Biff: Yeah definitely! No!

> *Interviewer: Can you foresee the social revolution in the near future?*
> Harvey: No. Not in the near future...being realistic about it.

> *Interviewer: Do you foresee the development of a...of anarchy, in the positive sense, in the near future?*
> Tom: No I don't. I'm extremely pessimistic. Because the really influential people obviously have no desire to have things altered.... And the tragedy and irony of it is...is that ordinary

people at the grassroots level, they just accept all the shit that's given them...

Interviewer: Do you foresee the development of a social revolution in the near future?
Ian: I see the development of revolutionary elements, and I see a lot of unrest among large urban working classes which has revolutionary potential.
Interviewer: Do you see an <u>actual</u> social revolution coming about in the near future?
Ian: A full social revolution? No.

These interviewees responded both to the failure of anarchist movements to make a significant enough impact on current thinking, and the absence of global popular unrest by totally discounting the idea of significant change. It is important to note that unlike some of the earlier respondents, they found no need to make their statements conditional. Their stance was to their mind being thoroughly realistic.

As the anarcho-pacifist informants agreed that stable anarchy is the result of the persuasion of more or less everybody of the value of that condition, they all concluded that the completion of the process of change was not likely within the lifetime of the initial instigators:

Interviewer: Could a full anarchist society emerge in the space of one lifetime?
Tom: No, I don't think it could. Because it's taken centuries to achieve what we've got, and what we've got is pretty horrendous! So, no, over several generations.

... certainly not in my lifetime. New paradigm thinking takes time to fructify (John).

None of the anarcho-pacifists thought that there was any chance of them witnessing anything resembling a stable anarchic society except in localised communities. They were not alone in this belief. Four of the other respondents rejected the idea that mature anarchy (as they defined it) could emerge in one generation:

It's gonna take hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years, you know. It's like one of those things that has to go on forever. And then maybe a couple of centuries down the line all of a sudden we have a really beautiful society, you know. I'm never gonna see a beautiful society (Brendan).

I have a feeling that it will take at least two or three

> [generations]. Just because the social...the awakening of people toward anarchy will be a slow process (Neil).
>
> Anarchy, in the sense of the absence of state, if that's how you define it - simply as that - could come about in the space of one lifetime. I don't think there's any doubt about that.... What we wouldn't achieve is...in a lifetime I don't expect, is the full realisation of people's desires (Kevin).

In effect these informants deny any prospect of their participation in the type of society that they see as just and ordered. No matter how much these respondents worked for social revolution, they believe they could never benefit from the anticipated fruits of it.

Four fellow non-pacifist interviewees believed to the contrary that mature anarchy could be developed within a generation of the initial revolutionary insurrection. The reasoning behind their stance arrives from two perspectives of the effects of the elimination of the state. Three informants felt that the key was humanity's capability of rapid change. They pointed variously to the Industrial Revolution, the Russian Revolution, the inter-war period, and the recent collapse of the Soviet Bloc, as periods where great demands for individual change had been met. The social revolution would demand the greatest personal revolution: people's anti-social tendencies would effectively cease when they realised their responsibility for the post-insurrectional society. The fourth informant emphasised the need to remove the taint created by criminalisation of certain acts and the preservation of private property, rather than expect great changes in people themselves:

> For me the whole point about an anarchist society is you're not trying to change people's behaviour...generally people are social beings. At the moment we've got all this crap imposed upon us about how you've got to work for a living, earn money, do shit things. All sorts of rubbish imposed upon us because the system's all distorted so a small group of people can run it for their benefit. By removing all these distortions hopefully...it'll help people get along together (Rob).

Present day anarchists participating in direct action or propagandising do so for some reason. Those who remain optimistic about

approaching social revolution might be thought likely to be channelling all efforts into preparing or fomenting it. The two most optimistic interviewees made very clear that their long-term practical goal was the initiation of revolution. They were also quick to address their short-term goals to preparatory work. In the case of Phil this meant attacking the material support of the state system, and in the case of Alan, the creation of revolutionary unionism:

> In the short term we see our goal here is to cause as much disruption and destruction of the existing economic infrastructure as possible (Phil).

> In its place - instead of rank-and-files - D.A.M. suggested putting forward a strategy of building industrial networks of people who had a firm belief in anarcho-syndicalist politics... the aim being to build up support for a revolutionary form of unionism, which at some point in the future, given mass strikes, mass disillusion with the bureaucracy, would then be in a position to call for a break with social democratic unions (Alan).

Of the less optimistic informants, five gave responses as to what they thought they could do as anarchists. Four respondents expressed the desire to expand the influence of anarchism, be it on an individual or mass scale. Minimally this connoted engaging friends and acquaintances in debate with the aim of converting them:

> I think basically that's all you can do, the average person that's all they can do is simply try and change the circle of people around you, your most immediate contacts (Tom).

Maximally this referred to the creation of a serious purposeful anarchist movement and a stronger sense of community amongst people generally:

> [I want] to revive the F.A.P. and network with similar organisations in other countries into some sort of International Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists... (John).

> I think what we'd like to create is a credible, strong, and fairly large anarchist, well, Anarchist Communist Federation, presence in British society, British labour movement, whatever (Kevin).

Two of the interviewees talked specifically about their interest in resisting the present encroachment of the state. One saw this as a

struggle to maintain the small foothold of influence that anarchists possessed:

> If you are doing any sort of anarchist activities now, you have to face the violence of the state. And in facing the violence of the state you need organised resistance (Ian).

The second was most insistent that he saw no value in organising for a speculative future when there were so many more concrete issues to deal with. If people were struggling to keep their jobs, or against racist violence, this deserved his full attention, and some abstract revolution none:

> I mean, I'm not working towards it [anarchy]. I'm working towards things being better today (Harvey).

Other informants mentioned only reformist goals.

The Informants and Violence

Because most of the respondents saw a future revolution and the present day circumstances as two distinct things, it seems a fair reflection to present their arguments in two sections. The first deals with the respondents' position on the use of violence during revolution (as the respondents themselves saw it). The informants' stance on the use of violence in pre-revolutionary conditions is surveyed second. Then the way that anarcho-pacifists and non-pacifist anarchists view each other and each others' stance on violence will be examined.

Violence and Revolution

Social change is received either harmoniously when the population as a whole desire it (or do not care enough about it to stand in its way), or inharmoniously with a resistant proportion. The more drastic the change the greater the scope for debate or conflict. Beyond

fictional caricature there is no anarchist tradition of seriously suggesting that violent confrontation would be preferable to the peaceful dissolution of the state. Outside of the anarcho-pacifist milieu, however, anarchist propaganda has primarily suggested the impossibility of ever securing general agreement for a change to anarchy. Vested interests either in the state or capital would, they believe, always fight to preserve asymmetric power/property relations.

Unsurprisingly, only those four respondents who declared themselves pacifists refused to express any positive link between the use of violence and achieving anarchy. None doubted that a massive army of anarchists armed to the teeth could vanquish a severely weakened state (though one expressed a belief that no government would have allowed anarchists to gain military advantage). In terms of what anarchists really wanted - anarchy - as opposed to what violence could bring about - the elimination of *a* government - the anarcho-pacifist opinion was clear: "...violence won't achieve anything for anyone..." (Seamus). The point put across was that violent revolution would always, no matter how successful, sustain the idea that use of might is the way to get what you want.

Even should it be possible to achieve a state of anarchy through violence, such a path was not ideologically open to the anarcho-pacifists. Three of them stressed the overwhelming importance of ideological parity between means and end. Two expressed the belief that violence or the intentional harming of any being was self-evidently wrong. If an act of violence was wrong, then it was wrong no matter who perpetrated it. If anarchists wanted a society based on mutual respect and rational persuasion then they should prove their commitment to this by practicing what they preached:

Interviewer: In your opinion are the ruling class capable of

giving up power peacefully?
Eric: Only if they are not threatened with reprisals and can be shown that losing their power could make them happier.

The opposite view was given by another interviewee who believed violence-free revolutionary social change could only occur if the violence was replaced by coercion:

> I can't visualise any ruling class is ever going to say "Oh well, you've taken over. Good luck!" I mean sorry. Unless, of course, they were...they felt quite terrorised (Albert).

The anarcho-pacifists differed by degree on how they should approach the conversion of non-anarchists. One gave the impression that self-motivated self-realisation was the real engine of social change. While accepting the concept of realisation, another anarcho-pacifist emphasised a role of positive reinforcement for anarchists:

> ...we all have different...we all have different political beliefs, and although you might not agree with someone's views, I suppose for the sake of...relative peace, you've got to... well, give an impression that you respect their views.... And then, like I say, try and change them... (Tom).

For Tom, even in an overwhelmingly pro-anarchist society, allowance had to be given to those who clung to the idea of the value of authority and property. The gap between persuasion and coercion became considerably narrower with a third anarcho-pacifist informant suggesting a role for "perhaps a nonviolent general strike/occupation coupled with pacifist social defence" (John).

Beside the anarcho-pacifists, two of the other interviewees noted - with airs of some doubt - that nonviolent revolution was theoretically possible:

> A social revolution could be nonviolent, but I can't work out how it would run (Rob).

> I think it's extremely unlikely you could have a social revolution with *no* violence at all. I mean, if you showed me a World Cup where you could have no violence taking place, well, I think you could have a world revolution without [it]!" (Albert).

Of the others there was resigned agreement that violence was inevitable. Inevitable but not desirable. None of the respondents indicated any desire for retribution. This may be accounted for by the fact that none of the interviewees came from countries where state repression was intolerable to anarchists let alone the population at large. The general concept of revolutionary social change was that the change itself came from peaceful means - this being consistent with the earlier claims that the pre-condition for change was general desire for it:

> Once you feel that you have gone beyond what you did, that you've used the violence for what its worth, you still have the same problem and you still have to work on it, so it's like, in the end it all has to come out in nonviolence, anyways. It *really does* (Brendan).
>
> Well, I think obviously a social revolution must in itself be peaceful... (Albert).

However if these respondents concurred with the anarcho-pacifists that persuasion and desire are the engine of social change, they, and the other respondents added that those belligerently intransigent in the face of this change had to be overcome by force. If the ruling class defended social injustice (or "structural violence"), then violence became justifiable:

> ...when we talk about violence it becomes a largely meaningless term. What we really have to talk about is what use of force is appropriate to the strategy you're advancing (Phil).
>
> I think violence is justified to end violence.... Violence is justified in opposing state violence - which is always greater (Kevin).

This utilitarian reasoning gave Kevin only partial satisfaction, reflected in a later contradiction which he himself noted as such:

> ...[we] try to make our ends and means compatible. And that is a problem often.... And we try and resolve it in terms of letting people make their own decisions (Kevin).

In the revolutionary context reactive and pro-active (offensive) violence were not seen as equally valid. One was justified primarily on

moral grounds, the other primarily on tactical ones. Two of the respondents emphasised that when the revolutionary event was incipient, it would be the state that would initiate violence:

> ...the powerful ruling class will start shitting themselves and they'll call in the army, the S.A.S., the police, the Territorial Army, whoever they can grab their hands on (Rob).

To counter this the revolutionary forces had to be ready with their own reactive defence:

> Our justification for violence is it's necessary to defend ourselves. Self-defence basically (Rob).

The moral responsibility for any violence was held by the state for initiating it. Moreover, the revolutionaries were not morally guilty of provocation by committing injustices to the ruling class, because they were only seeking to correct the injustice sanctioned by the state.

The one respondent who expressed a belief in the likelihood of pro-active revolutionary violence was the only one who plainly referred to the Malatestan insurrectionary tradition. For him pro-active violence in the form of spontaneous armed uprising was organically linked to revolutionary social change. He also made the point that the necessary violent phase of revolution would only occur when the revolutionary mass was a "great majority," and that success was practically inevitable:

> ...I'd be fearful that it [a minority insurrection] wouldn't accomplish enough.... It wouldn't go far enough and so it would also slow down the revolution (Neil).

Pre-Revolutionary Violence

The clear but unenthusiastic endorsement of violence in revolution by the informants (excepting the anarcho-pacifists) does not allow any automatic conclusions of how they might view the use of violence in a pre-revolutionary situation. "Pre-revolutionary" might refer to either of two conditions: that situation where activities are planned with no

expectation of revolution; or the scenario in which undertakings are made in the belief that revolution will follow. When questioning the respondents the interviewer sought to make some distinction between the future and the present. Only two of the interviewees considered the present period in the second sense of the term, the rest relating the questioning automatically to the first interpretation. Given the lack of immediate prospects for revolutionary social change new emotions come into the cost-benefit analysis of violence, including resignation and frustration.

The appeal to pre-revolutionary violence that came up most frequently amongst the interviewees was that of self-defence. The concept of self-defence held by the informants stretched from the straightforward to the unorthodox. The most conspicuous case of self-defence is reaction to direct violent threat: "I think violence on the picket line is, I mean if the police are attacking you, like Orgreave for example, you have a right to resort to violence" (Kevin). The use of violence to counter violence was accepted as a legitimate response even by two of the anarcho-pacifists. Both conceded that self-defence was a morally acceptable (or instinctual and therefore amoral) option - insofar as it was unpremeditated. A third felt that he could make no judgement on others' use of violence in self-defence, drawing particular reference to women hitting back at their brutal husbands.

The anarcho-pacifists would not countenance the endorsement of the concept of self-defence where there was no clear and present danger of physical violence. This despite the view accepted by them that structural injustice also equalled violence. The other informants, with greater or lesser degrees of enthusiasm, accepted that self-defence did not end with the removal of immediate danger to self or others. Initiation of conflict with those who regularly attacked anarchists - or

the working class, or the people - could still be considered as self-defence:

> "self-defence is no offence" has often been said.... Certainly we support anyone who sought to defend working class people who sought to defend their own communities from being attacked (Alan).
>
> The police are a violent manifestation of the state, so beating them shitless seems fine (Rob).

Other pretexts for violence were based around the idea of political expression for a largely voiceless constituency. Those who were normally victims of repression needed to show to their oppressors that they were not to be regarded as helpless prey. This display was empowering for the repressed as well:

> At the point of impact, when you get hit in the face by a policeman, then, it brings together every political argument you've ever thought about in terms of violence and nonviolence; in that you think of somebody who's got a lot of power invested in them by the state and by the government, and they are...they are bringing it all to a small minuscule point, where they're just punching you in the face, and as soon as that happens you realise that...that you are totally powerless and the only power you've got is...to hit them back harder than they've hit you... (Biff).

The feeling was strong amongst a number of the informants that when it came down to it, the only way of demonstrating opinion to the determined state was pro-active violent protest: "I think in this society, when you've got such a repressive and violent state, the only way you can show any protest is through violence" (Ian). The failure of recent nonviolent protest organisations to maintain high profiles or provide dramatic successes (here the respondents pointed primarily to C.N.D.) gave the informants the justification for this assessment. The reason why the anti-poll tax movement and the miners had been so strong was their willingness to show violent resistance:

> ...they [the miners] *are* a reactively violent sort of community. And I think that's why they were powerful. (Biff)

The analysis given was somewhat selective in its evidence. The miners' power dissipated as the mining industry was obliterated from above; the

poll tax failed to survive more because of its great unpopularity and mass non-payment than because the government was terrified by the poll tax riot or the isolated inner-city no-go zones for poll tax enforcers. If several of the respondents found violence empowering, only one explicitly referred to the insurrectionary tradition having an educative function: "I guess that I believe that violence can accomplish a lot of things in raising consciousness..." (Neil).

The opinions covered so far referred primarily to open acts of resistance. Of greater contention was that area defined popularly as "terrorism," a term usually laden with value, as recognised by one interviewee: "The media would describe anything that's effective action against the state as terrorism" (Phil). Being such a value-laden word, a number of the interviewees refused to refer to what anarchists might have been involved in in the past, or could be in the future, as terrorism, one alternative being "revolutionary violence." It is unhelpful in this context to use a term that typically refers to any violent act carried out by a group one dislikes. Better instead to identify two crude varieties of clandestine (as opposed to overt) violence: discriminate acts which are primarily an end in themselves (such as assassination); and indiscriminate acts (such as bombings) which are either a means of alerting/terrorising a wider audience, or are meant to be discriminate but are clumsily performed so as to endanger others.

Three of the seven respondents who endorsed the use of clandestine violence only did so where it specifically referred to discriminate assassinations:

> ...if, for instance, the king of Italy ordered the troops to fire on a demonstration and killed a hundred people, somebody came and shot *him*. That is one thing of terrorism which I think is perfectly logical (Albert).

Indiscriminate clandestine violence was forcefully rejected by most of the informants. Among the reasons cited was the value of the innocent life lost and the overshadowing of any intended positive message by general outrage. Only one informant came out in partial favour of indiscriminate clandestine violence:

> Terrorism is a way of lashing out at things you don't see end to. You don't see a mass movement, right. If there was a mass movement I don't think there would be any terrorism (Brendan).

With such a glaringly small anarchist constituency facing the gargantuan state Brendan accepted the rationale of taking out frustration on the infrastructure of an indifferent society not in order to convert, but firstly to achieve practical successes (emphasising animal exploitation targets), and secondly to make people less disinterested. His disgust with heedless humanity was balanced on a knife-edge: "I wake up some days, I feel like...I think everybody...I feel like going around shooting people" (Brendan).

The main objection that the informants had with revolutionary "terrorist" organisations was that the structure of these groups tended to be alien to anarchist concepts of organisation. The informants mentioned the Angry Brigade and the Red Army Fraction (RAF) as typifying the aloof mentality of the vanguard elite, operating "on behalf of the people" without gaining their consent to do so:

> I could put a bomb in Tory headquarters...and issue a press release saying it was done by, I dunno, the Black Hand Gang in support of the striking miners.... The miners might sit there and think, "Well, we didn't really want this guy to blow up a Tory MP, it doesn't really help us" (Rob).

The importance of this organisational critique was such that two of the respondents believed that discriminate acts of clandestine violence were justifiable if performed by "non-elitist" groups with the sanction of their community. The possible mechanics of such groups were not discussed. For the remaining respondents actual community involvement in

the process of change remained the only really ideologically sound method of organisation. Where clandestine activities distanced the struggle away from the community and encouraged dependency, involving the community required people to take responsibility for their battles.

Beyond the organisational criticisms were the more functional ones on the improbability of positive effects resulting from even discriminate acts. Two informants pointed out that clandestine violence was either hopeless frustration, or the mistaken attempt to by-pass the drudgery of mining the foundations of the state by ripping away the surface stratum - only to find a myriad layers beneath. One informant recognised the futility of suggesting that an *attentat* (assassination, or attempted assassination) could bring about social change. For him its purpose was purely deterrent:

> ...obviously it wasn't meant to change anything. It was meant to discourage. (Albert)

None of those interviewees who supported clandestine violence commented on deleterious effects that might result from attacks - not least further repression on a community by the state.

While *attentats* were not regarded by most of the respondents as a justified tool for anarchists in most circumstances, several felt the need to defend the *Attentäter*:

> I personally wouldn't go out and shoot a policeman. I can't see any point in doing that, right now. But if someone does, then we report it in the paper [*Class War*] and say, "Yeah! Nice one, you got one!" (Rob).

This sub-Kropotkinite defence of a deed one would not perform, but understand the reasoning for, extended amongst some of the respondents to acts accomplished by the IRA or the RAF.

The Pacifist/Non-Pacifist Divide

Both the anarcho-pacifists and the non-pacifist

anarchist interviewees tended to regard each other as well-meaning - if obstructive - people not fully aware of the facts of the situation. Only one non-pacifist voice denied that anarcho-pacifists should be considered as anarchists at all:

> What they [anarcho-pacifists] really mean is that they're liberal, they're advanced liberals. They're not really anarchists because they don't believe in the overthrow of the state (Albert).

The non-pacifist interviewees largely rejected the quasi-absolutist aphorisms of nonviolence: that the use of violence tends to self-perpetuation, that revolutionary violence maintains a culture of violence; in the pre-revolutionary situation violence leads to reprisals, in the post-revolutionary situation the victors were those who had learned to rely on violence and coercion. Most of the non-pacifist respondents, sidestepped these axioms by indicating that nonviolence could only be so effective in the face of a determined violent state, and thus in its own way nonviolence aided in the preservation of a violent culture.

The tendency of the non-pacifist interviewees was to concede that a lot could be achieved by nonviolence, and a number pointed to the example of Gandhi's partially successful advocacy of *satyagraha*:

> I respect people who...if they genuinely believe in pacifism. And if they want to be active in that way it's good.... I think it's good that people question violence (Ian).

But the respondents believed there were definite limits to what nonviolence could achieve in the face of a determined foe, the alternative historical example here being Hitler:

> They [nonviolent protests] will raise people's awareness, but I don't think they will actually bring about some of the final stages of the revolution (Neil).
>
> ...there's a lot of people that don't, you know...it [love and rational persuasion] doesn't affect them (Neil).
>
> I think nonviolence is a nice idea.... Unfortunately, I don't think it...can work all the time.... I would like to be a

> pacifist, but at the same time...given the fact that violence is actually concentrated in the state, in the armed forces, in nuclear weapons, and so on and so forth, it's not possible to be pacifist (Kevin).

For the violent solution to be valid it had to secure more justice and peace, in the eyes of the informants, than nonviolent methods. Given that government was manifestly wrong, their disbelief that nonviolent methods could effect the elimination of the state, led to the reasoning that recourse to violence had to be the better answer:

> If you want to stop and counter violence, you have to do it with a fist. If people are attacking and are violent they have to be stopped. By being pacifistic you're giving people a free hand. By countering them with our own weapon, you're creating a peaceful situation (Ian).

The assumption of the non-pacifist interviewees was that revolutionary forces could overcome the gargantuan might of the state, and at not too high a cost. One of the respondents pitted the full might of the state's armed forces against a swift and canny revolutionary mass. The other informants who expressed an opinion tended to believe that desertion and low morale would be the decisive factors. Two of the respondents pointed out that nonviolence does not mean "no violence":

> ...the thing about Gandhian techniques of resistance is in fact that they're incredibly *violent*, but that violence is directed *against* those undertaking acts of resistance as a way to curry public sympathy... (Phil).

The denunciation of nonviolent techniques went further. For one respondent they were at best unlikely to be able to maintain any effect on the state whatsoever. With the same reasoning that persistent use of violence desensitises the user to violence, one interviewee suggested that persistent contact with nonviolent resisters desensitised the agents of the state to moral appeal. At worst he suggested that the agapaic brand of nonviolence could actually strengthen the state:

> I'd say that an attempt to appeal to the oppressor, rather than empowering oneself to resist the oppressor, maintains that structure of violence... (Phil).

In the clearest refutation of the pacifist axiom that violence begets violence Phil proffered an alternative: "...resistance begets violence!"

Aside from the practical criticisms of nonviolence, a number of the respondents found themselves unwilling to sacrifice their livelihoods or lives without having the theoretical opportunity of attacking the state:

> ...if you're having a social revolution, and they decide to send in the army, what are you going to do if you're nonviolent? Just sort of lie down and get shot? Not only am I not prepared to lie down and get shot saying, "I'm a nonviolent person, so it's OK to shoot me," I wouldn't call for anyone else to (Rob).

There is little rational force behind such an argument. The respondent incorrectly parodies nonviolent protesters as willing victims rather than the determined resisters that they can be. The interviewee rejects the perceived passivity of nonviolent activists. He himself does not want to die without hope of seeing victory, but is prepared to if the sacrifice leaves an opportunity to show resistance and possibly damage some fraction of his foe (which is the state, rather than the individual soldier). However, the nonviolent resister also shows resistance, but would prefer to morally and emotionally challenge the foe rather than hurt them. The parallels between nonviolent and violent concepts of resistance are actually quite close. Neither wish to believe that their sacrifices have been for nought. Consequently neither side benefits from belittling the other's perception of sacrifice, for their real argument is in how successful their technique is.

The anarcho-pacifist informants were isolated not only physically (the Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists being moribund), but also in temperament. A great deal in their testimonies was self-regarding - much more so than that of the non-pacifist anarchist interviewees. Consequently, their attitudes towards other anarchists was benign and unemotional. The anarcho-pacifists appeared not to desire debate with

fellow anarchists more than with non-anarchists. The one interviewee who tackled the area head-on addressed the non-pacifist anarchists much as he might have any other socialist revolutionary:

> I can't see anyone who seriously wants to abolish government *per se*, resorting to terrorism [or violence]... (Seamus).

While the anarcho-pacifists either explicitly or tacitly distanced themselves from condemning the violent anarchist, they were concerned that their violent acts were no more justifiable than others'. Anarchists took equal responsibility for the deaths in any conflict in which they participated (Eric).

The informants shared with each other a desire for a kind of social justice that they believed could not be created under the auspices of the state. For some this meant just deserts for one particular fraction of society, the working classes. For others, justice for all creatures was linked with the idea that devolved anarchy provided the only realistic organisational basis for sustainable society. These were the primary concerns of the informants and not, interestingly, the desire for individual liberty, which was not mentioned by a single respondent (besides the egoist, and *ex*-anarchist, Stan).

While some of the informants clearly anticipated the advent of social revolution, the general pessimistic tenor regarding the likelihood of imminent social transformation is evident. To many of the respondents pessimism was be equated with "being realistic." Nor were any inclined to suggest that the movement toward anarchy was inevitable. The goal that most of the informants aspired to was not fomenting revolution, but rather encouraging people to regard government critically and anarchism positively. Most ambitiously this meant

creating credible anarchist organisations, but practically it referred to spreading anarchist propaganda and resisting the free rein of the state.

There was a clear gap between pacifist and non-pacifist respondents when it came to the question of violence in the revolution. The non-pacifists could barely conceive the defenders of institutionalised power giving up that power without a fight. This is not to say that they equated violent insurrection with social revolution, only that rapid social transformation necessitated violence. The benefits of anarchy justified both the social revolution and the attendant violence. In further justification, most denied that the revolutionaries would be the ones to initiate violence, and held that the acts of revolutionaries would, for the most part, be acts of defence. The anarcho-pacifist informants believed that obtaining societal rearrangement by violence was either self-evidently wrong, or, indeed, was incapable of bringing about a qualitatively different kind of society at all.

Sharp delineations were easy while the question was academic to the majority of the informants. Fractions only really began to appear among the non-pacifists when the issue of pre-revolutionary violence was broached. Self-defence remained the primary justification, but other, less accepted, motives became apparent: empowerment, punishment, and deterrence. Acts of resistance justified on these grounds expressed not only a willingness to react to provocation, but also to use violence as an assertive tool.

While the informants agreed on the disavowal of indiscriminate clandestine violence, discriminate clandestine violence received a degree of qualified approval. As acts of resistance assassinations were certainly considered spectacular - if ineffective at much more than

spectacle. Some, however, were critical of the nascent vanguardism of the *attentat*, particularly when in reference to the clandestine self-contained "terrorist" cell.

The non-pacifist informants took the question of violence as a serious issue; little of the macho posturing that often accompanies the advocacy of violence was observable. The glorification of blood and destruction commonly associated with anarchists was also notable by its absence from the content of their statements. The non-pacifists were, generally speaking, conciliatory towards anarcho-pacifism - nonviolence being seen as a morally valuable, but practically ineffective method.

CHAPTER 4 RECENT PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE

The periodical and pamphlet have been isolated as propaganda source literature in this study because of the immediate currency that they hold in anarchist circles. The pamphlet is a vintage method of communication between anarchists. Unarguably its influence is less now than in earlier decades of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries (see Dubois, 1894, pp. 65-6), but it remains the weapon of the propagandist seeking a format allowing greater length than is normally possible or appropriate in the anarchist papers, or whose opinions are not shared with, or desirable to, the publishers of those papers. The pamphlet allows the author to indulge in pursuing a desired argument, and the reader to take up a manageable length of text, (usually) avoiding the padding and mixed-bag of subjects often found in books. The pamphlet's ease, speed, and economy of production, not to mention its inexpensive retail price continues to make it a useful means of rapidly spreading a theoretical point in a way that books tend not to. Much of Murray Bookchin's *Post Scarcity Anarchism* first emerged in pamphlet format, and Chomsky is to be found in anarchist bookshops most often in pamphlet format.

Excluding those countries where government repression makes publication impractical - and these have become fewer since the collapse of the state socialist governments of Eastern Europe and beyond - the quality or quantity of anarchist periodicals is a reasonable indicator of the vigour of anarchist movements. In the last decade both *Black Flag* and *Freedom* have been produced fortnightly, monthly, and irregularly. In Britain and North America appeals for financial help to decrease production deficits are a constant reminder of the movements' frailty.

The size or wealth of the readership is not, however the sole factor in the quality, or shelf-life of a periodical. For the majority of anarchist publications - given their chosen method of production - longevity depends upon the maintenance of a workable collective. The death or migration of vital collective members can effectively kill an otherwise healthy and popular periodical. This was the reason for one of only two dissolutions - or indefinite suspensions - in Britain, of a publication of national stature in the last decade, *Black Flag* (the other being the second series of *Anarchy*). A combination of financial strictures and organisational imperfections has seen the rapid appearance and disappearance of numerous locally produced papers in recent years (for interesting examples see Leamington Spa's *Land and Liberty* or Bristol's *Stuff It*).

Anarchist Periodicals

The Nature of Anarchist Periodicals

In common with any paper with an agenda of propagandism or advocacy - and one might include daily newspapers - the anarchist periodical has to develop a format and style with which its audience is happy. The periodical may aim to reflect the mood of its audience, or press an agenda which it believes needs an audience. The nature of anarchist periodicals may be assessed by whether they follow a predominantly activist or theoretical line, and the degree to which they promote the editorial line.

In simple terms an anarchist periodical leans towards activism when it concerns itself with the events of the day, attacking the government and ruling hierarchy, encouraging action amongst anarchists

(be it organisational or physical), and propagating the idea that such action is important either in defence of a position or in promoting change. In contrast is the purely theoretical anarchist periodical which concerns itself with anarchist history, history from an anarchist perspective, anarchist theory, and critiques of rival socio-political theories. The nearest anarchists come to producing theoretical journals in the English language are the American *Anarchy* and the British *Raven*. In contrast, *Class War* tries very hard to eliminate theoretical consideration from its pages. Most anarchist papers have steered a course between the two, from the primarily activist *Profane Existence* to the predominantly theoretical *Black Flag Quarterly*. Two (*Green Anarchist* and the second series of *Anarchy*) moved significantly away from their theoretical roots towards greater activism (see fig. 2).

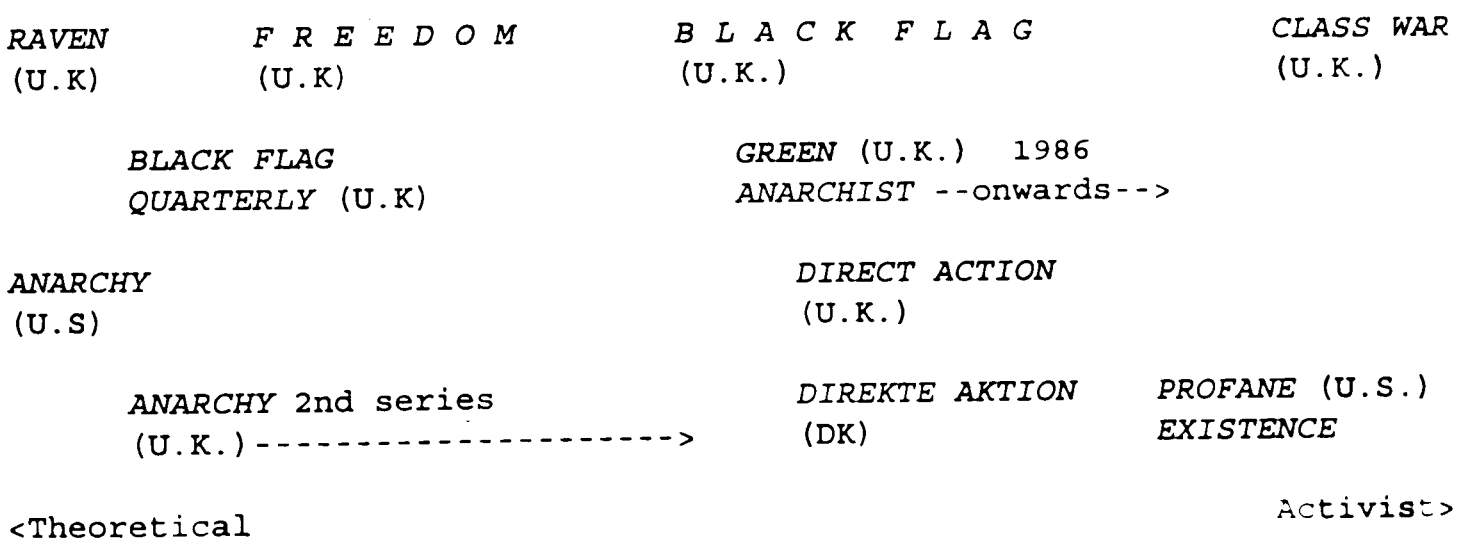

Fig. 2 Approximate Positioning of Selected Anarchist Periodicals 1980-1993 on a Theoretical/Activist Axis

Unsurprisingly the theoretical periodicals allow debate to go largely unhindered in their pages. The existence of a permissive editorial line, however, is not confined to the more theoretical periodicals. Punk anarchist and class struggle papers such as Chicago's *Wind Chill Factor* and Minneapolis's *Profane Existence* have allowed readers to express criticism without editorial post-scripts. The ultimate activist paper, *Class War*, has proved itself less shuttered than the "serious" *Black Flag*.

In countries where the anarchist press is widely dispersed (U.S., Canada and Australia), or very weak (Denmark) there is little in the way of inter-periodical conflict. In contrast, the densely packed British papers have had a tendency to snipe at each other at the least provocation. The uncrowned champion of intolerance was *Black Flag*. As its nearest rival, *Freedom* came in for considerable criticism both in terms of personalities and style. After perceived attacks on itself and the Direct Action Movement, a *Black Flag* commentary declared *Freedom*'s style as that of the "lone heroic understanding voice against the brutally ignorant anarchist masses," and went on to charge it with outright abandonment: "it was milk-and-water liberalistic pseudo-anarchism: *now* it is anti-anarchist" ('Best of the...', 1984, p. 3). In 1987 a supplement was produced which concentrated accusations on the quietism of *Freedom* - quietists being defined as "those who are not pacifists but are opposed to *any* action" ('Liars and liberals,' 1987, pp. 1-4). *Green Anarchist*, originating from the *Freedom* stable, came in for similar bile, *Black Flag* scoffing that it sought: "to be a more pacifistic version of *Freedom*. Few thought it possible" ('"Anarchist squabbles"', 1984, p. 6). Though *Freedom* largely ignored the attacks, their periodic retorts were subtle, but often no less snide. *Black Flag Supplement* 3 drew the comment that it could be seen "either as a

powerful satire on anarchist propaganda or as a rather alarming symptom of abnormal psychology" ('As others...', 1987, p. 2).

Neither *Black Flag* nor *Freedom* could accept affinity with *Class War*. *Black Flag* declared that "at the crunch it is council communist and opposes organised anarchism" ('Best of the...', 1984, p. 3). Freedom commented on *Class War*'s pursuance of a controversial media profile: "[Anarchism] is not about becoming famous/infamous and being childishly self-indulgent at other people's expense" (Stuart, 1985, p. 5). *Stuff It* produced perhaps the most eloquent criticism of *Class War*'s self-declared ruthless approach:

> They look grim, think grim, they are grim. With a grim determination they turn revolutionary practice into a straight jacket, they chaff off the useless, unnecessary bits like desire, subjectivity, love, happiness, consideration for other revolutionaries... (Iron Mask of Freedom, 1984).

The Periodicals on Social Change and Violence

The anarchist periodicals, as both products and influences of the movement, may to some degree provide a barometer of the optimism for change. In the more activist papers this translates to opinion on what is to be done. The general shift in the British papers in the 1980s was of increasing optimism over popular unrest. This was reflected in inner city disturbances, labour struggles, the anti-poll tax movement, and awareness of ecological issues. Into the 1990s this optimism has been tempered with questions over why the anarchist movement, though capable of short-term capitalisation of popular disaffection, has failed to maintain a consistently increasing momentum over the entire period.

Of all the papers, *Green Anarchist* has had, since 1986 and the rejection of its strategic pacifist beginnings, the most positive agenda for revolution. While others may talk primarily of building up support for a revolutionary movement, *Green Anarchist* talks strategy and

tactics. Its ideological statement, first enunciated in the Oct./Nov. 1986 issue, states that revolution would begin in the third world, but that the metropolitan countries could experience their own centres of rebellion "on the periphery." What could actually be done remained vague from 1986 to 1990: "Actions in the countryside, at military sites, land squats, industrial targets"; building a "culture of resistance from festivals, gigs, fanzines...." By the Spring 1991 issue the supportive role of revolutionaries in the industrialised nations had become much more specific.

Other equally activist periodicals do not anticipate and plan for revolution anywhere near as seriously as *Green Anarchist* does. The media-perceived fanaticism of *Class War* or *Xtra!* is not based on their starry-eyed talk of revolution but their greater appeal to violence of the mob-riot variety. The one-off *Attack* outlined numerous violent and nonviolent acts, but acts of resistance rather than revolution:

> today's struggles have deep roots in the past. We're not the first to fight back - and we probably won't be the last. If we're really going to pull apart this world, we need strategy for years, not just tactics for tonight ('Dropping bombs?', n.d., p. 14).

Class War's regular ideological statement makes it plain that its aim is "the destruction of the ruling class by the working class...class war." However, references that the paper makes to the future (and not-too-distant-future) tend to be directed at a somewhat permanent-sounding class struggle rather than the more final-sounding social revolution.

Interest in more obviously constructive work such as consciousness-raising and the encouragement of "parallel institutions" in preparation for an indeterminate future revolutionary period is the theme of other activist and semi-activist papers. In anarchist communist/punk anarchist papers like *Land & Liberty*, *Profane Existence*, or Toronto's more cerebral *Kick It Over*, the emphasis is on establishing

cooperative ventures such as food stores. In the anarcho-syndicalist and syndicalist *Direct Action* and *Industrial Worker* the aim is the creation of a commanding revolutionary industrial union from the tiny core of D.A.M. or Wobbly activists.

Despite their mutual antagonism and differences in pretension, both *Freedom* and *Black Flag* have provided more of a commentary on events rather than a prescription - hence the fusion of myopia and utopian vision, but with nothing in the middle. Frustration with this is obvious from those with a prescriptive agenda, such as Nigel Fox, writing in *Socialism From Below* regarding the miners' strike:

> *Black Flag* was almost entirely given over to the latest news from the frontline of the struggle. However, news was all it was[.] There was woefully little attempt made to provide any sustained anarchist analysis, still less a political lead or the tactics needed to win (1989, p. 7).

Black Flag and *Freedom* aim to keep anarchists informed, interested, and involved, rather than providing them with solutions which they feel they should be providing for themselves.

The resigned indignation expressed by some non-pacifist interviewees over my interest in the violence issue was not often reflected in the propagandist literature. Nicholas Walter does, however, give a formula response :

> Despite popular prejudice, anarchism is not necessarily violent in principle; and despite received opinion, anarchists are not particularly violent in practise - less so than most of our rivals on the left or right (1983, p. 4).

While this may be so, the medium-intensity interest on the subject in the periodicals in the 1980s and early 1990s would appear to suggest that the question of whether and how activists should use violence as a political tool is not unfairly attributed in the media and academia to anarchism, but rather that it is unfairly unattributed to other revolutionary or reactionary doctrines.

As with the interviewees there is no discord in the periodicals with the idea that violence in itself is not revolutionary, and that anarchy will not magically spring from violence and coercion, but from education, persuasion, and realisation: "The essence of revolution is not armed confrontation with the state but the nature of the movement which backs it up" ('You can't blow...', 1990, p. 8). Even the belligerent *Class War* and post-1986 *Green Anarchist* admit to the inefficacy of relying on violence alone in effecting change (Albon, 1986, p. 6; *Class War*, 41). Nevertheless, a strategic or tactical use of violence is not automatically dismissed by this admission. Alan Albon maintains that "Agreement between anarchists on the subject has never been reached" (1982, p. 3). This is hardly surprising given the highly disparate premises that are produced in defence of entrenched positions:

> the debate has remained at a high level of abstraction. One side speaks of "ethics" or "ends and means", while the other considers violent action an *a priori* necessity (Gambone, 1990, p. 5).

The most extensive debate in any recent periodical was the war of words which took place in the pages of *Freedom* from May to December 1992. Although this did not by any means cover all of the associated issues, it is an interesting exploration of argument and counter-argument which make glancing blows upon each other.

In addition to the ethical/theoretical division is the inability of anarchists to settle on a linguistic compromise for a terminology of agreed value. MH in *Freedom* argues that the debate over terrorism "can't even begin until everyone recognises that terrorism by anarchists is still terrorism" (1986, p. 18). What MH fails to appreciate is that the propaganda battle between the state and would-be revolutionaries does not allow concessions which can later be used against them. It is, for instance, inconceivable that a government would freely admit to pursuing a policy of terrorism. It is hardly surprising, then, that the Black

Flag Collective took umbrage at the labelling of armed anarchists as terrorists. In response to a *Daily Telegraph* "exposé" defining *Black Flag* as an "international link with revolutionary terrorism," they noted that discriminate assassinations of agents of government repression were "acts of resistance" rather than terrorism. The property-based bombings performed by the Vancouver 5 or Angry Brigade were not terrorism, rather: "terrorism is indiscriminate killing. It is dropping a bomb on Hiroshima..." (1985). Similarly, criticism of violence at a Stop the City demo in 1984 brought the indignant retort: "...the only violence I saw came from the pigs - don't confuse vandalism with violence - don't fall into the media trap..." ('A personal viewpoint...', 1984, p. 4).

In the periodicals, as with the interviewees, something of a distinction needs to be made about revolutionary and pre-revolutionary violence. Protagonists argue either that violence, be it pro-active or reactive, is practically inevitable for a successful revolution, or that violence makes a successful revolution impossible. The acceptability of pro-active violence in the pre-revolutionary scenario is asserted by far fewer anarchist sources. Justifications for violence tend to be based on the idea of defence against oppression and, less frequently, in terms of vengeance and confidence-building.

The Propagandist Debate on Revolutionary and Pre-Revolutionary Violence

Propaqandist Literature and Revolutionary Violence

It is clear from many of the non-pacifist sources that revolution is seen as a thing that cannot be accomplished without recourse to violence: "It will be an armed revolution, but only because it has to be" ('Backlash', 1984, p. 4). The reasoning behind the belief in

inevitability is evident from *Class War*'s clarion call in issue 41: "...we advocate the use of force to take on the class enemy because they will never give up power peacefully." This conclusion is derived from a basic anarchist belief in the nature of institutionalised power, but is usually defended less from a theoretical stand-point than from anecdotal historical evidence. This is an uncomfortable argument on which to base a *sine qua non*. Contrary anecdotal evidence can point to instances where governments - for instance the Marcos administration - have fallen through popular (and élite) pressure rather than popular violence. The argument for the inevitability of violence is finely balanced on the belief that entire *ruling classes* do not voluntarily dissolve - e.g. the French or Russian aristocracies - and the extrapolation of this to universal principle. A retort is that as all precedents for historical analysis of "successful" revolutions have been authoritarian ones, it is a little premature to deny the value of a nonviolent approach.

Those writers who do express a belief in the inevitability of violence on the occasion of the social revolution must logically believe that it is possible to overcome the military might of the state. While this seems, given the present conditions, a somewhat impractical if not insane proposition, some supporters of this argument put up a spirited defence of it. Supporters note from historical evidence such as Indo-China/Vietnam and the FSLN in Nicaragua that military inferiority of the revolutionaries does not predetermine failure (Birrell, 1992a, p. 7; Borrows, 1992b, p. 3). While the obvious can be said (and has, see IRSM, 1980, p. 1; Cullen, 1992b, p. 8), that such successes were based on topographical, political, and economic factors not generally replicable, the precedent stands that militarily weak can overcome militarily strong. The more considered proponents of this position do not in any case see the military factor as the main one. It is not the quality of

weaponry, but the quality of commitment and understanding not only of those prepared to fight, but also of the general population (IRSM, 1980, p. 1).

The advocates of a nonviolent strategy emphasise their not inconsiderable doubt that revolutionary forces are really capable of conquering the military machine of the industrial nations (Cullen, 1992a, p. 8). The other question they ask of the non-pacifist anarchists is whether the calculated (but not assured) end is worth the millions of casualties, combatants and non-combatants that they believe are likely in a head-on conflict (Gambone, 1990, p. 5).

Supporters of a revolutionary strategy involving violence do not (except with overt bravado) promote head-on military conflict as an initial tactic. As Clark (1981) or Gambone (with great scepticism; 1990, p. 5) suggest, other factors such as popular disillusionment with the system, prolonged economic crisis, and increasing decadence of the state are vital before any hope of an uprising involving violence could hope to be successful. The question of casualties is a very thorny issue for the advocates of a violent approach, which they tend to pass over.

The most sustained opposition to approaches involving violence come from anarcho-pacifists stressing both the immorality and futility of violence. The pacifist half of anarcho-pacifism may assert that violence is a bad act, that no good can come of a bad act, and that even with the best of intentions its use maintains the pattern of violence. The anarchist half argues that violence, being related to power, is doctrinal anathema to those who seek human relations founded on rational persuasion. Also, that power tends to self-preservation, if not accumulation, such that organised militias will invariably tend towards the status of the proto-state:

Violence cannot destroy the State because the State is more than a

> series of institutions and their servants: it is above all an attitude of mind.... A violent revolution *may* succeed in destroying the State in its present form, but the state will rise again from the ashes (Anark, 1987, p. 5).

Similarly: "If 'political power comes from the barrel of a gun' then equally it is from the barrel of a gun flows the will to power..." ('The futility of...', 1992, p. 23). The failure of past socialist revolutions to lessen violence, power, authority, and social stratification is given as empirical proof of this (Cullen, 1992a, p. 8; Fisher, 1992, p. 8). Historical evidence is, of course, anecdotal, and cannot rule out violent revolution producing a peaceful, anarchist outcome.

While non-pacifist anarchists remain sensitive to the idea of creeping militarism in revolutionary forces, it remains rare for there to be an exposition of the form and function of popular militias, and the differentiation of these from regular units. One of the most effective instruction manuals on military preparation by an anarchist, notes that anarchists are bound by "social and political beliefs," which required that their "means cannot, must not, be separated," from their ends (IRSM, 1980, p. 2). While the manual outlines the positive nature of affinity groups and organisation from the base, it concedes that "people engaged in armed combat have little time for a summit meeting" (1980, p. 3). This seems very much to suggest that prescribed ideals must play second fiddle to practical needs. The inference of most advocates of violent revolution is that ends are not definitively corrupted by means, and that a little doctrinal ambiguity may be justified for actual victory:

> Means and ends are [interdependent]. Moral judgements cannot be suspended; but as the war hots up they become more *relative*... (McArdle, n.d., p. 11).

The problem of a relative argument is the question of where to draw the line. If ends and means are not definitively linked then there is nothing intrinsically wrong with using violence to destroy violence. But

by the same token there is nothing wrong *per se* with the use of government to abolish government. If one desires to justify violence but not revolutionary government, one cannot rely on a relative calculation alone.

While it is common to talk of the inevitability of violence in the social revolution, less is written on further speculation as to which side is likely to be the aggressor. The right to take the offensive has been upheld in activist papers: violence being inevitable because in order for the revolution to succeed it has to conquer the state (Marcone, n.d., p. 8; 'Class War - Macho?', n.d.). However, the emphasis more often than not is on the defensive nature of anarchist revolutionary violence: violence is inevitable because the state will attack the revolution ('When will they...', 1987, p. 5; Albon, 1986, p. 6).

One *Freedom* correspondent suggests that the majority of anarchists view "a distinction between violence in self-defence, and other forms of violence" (Birrell, 1992b, p. 8; also JS, 1992, p. 8). This does not, however, mean that they agree on where to draw the line. The concept of self-defence, used widely to justify anarchist violence in revolutionary or pre-revolutionary conditions, is a nebulous one: from the lashing-out of a individual under personal attack to pro-active defence - that is, attack as a means of defence. Strategic pacifists, who accept that unpremeditated violence in self/other-defence is justifiable (Cullen, 1992c, p. 8; 'The futility of...', 1992, p. 24), are, as Birrell notes, always in danger of having to justify much more violence than they thought they would (1992c, p. 7).

One very powerful argument that did emerge from the anarcho-pacifist side in the long-running debate in *Freedom* was that self-defence was only morally justifiable if it actually defended. In the

opinion of anarcho-pacifist Ernie Crosswell, the response of the militarily weaker revolutionaries to the aggression of the state's forces simply added up to higher net casualty figures (especially among civilians). Better then for the revolutionaries to face death unarmed and minimise those casualties (1992c, p. 8). Birrell scoffs that "that's the first strategic theory I've come across which advocates suicide as a means" (1992c, p. 7). Disturbing to the non-pacifist anarchists though it may be, there is a logic in the Crosswell scenario, in that defiantly laying down one's pea-shooter in the face of the state's cannon is no more suicide than defiantly using it (Crosswell, 1992d, p. 8).

Propagandist Literature and Pre-Revolutionary Violence

The acceptance of the inevitability of violence in the revolutionary scenario should not indicate the automatic desirability of violence in the pre-revolutionary scenario. Birrell for one sees little justification other than self-defence for violence today (1992a, p. 7). Besides self-defence, violence in the pre-revolutionary scenario is vindicated in some of the activist literature in terms of vengeance/punishment and confidence-building. Jack McArdle asks bemusedly: "Why is there this aversion to using political violence against people who *deserve* it, in a proper and discriminating way?" (n.d., p. 11). Discriminate acts of clandestine violence such as "clean" assassinations of oppressors (*i.e.*, by rifle rather than car-bomb) are similarly defended by the Black Flag Collective as "legitimate acts of resistance" (1985). There is little moral or doctrinal reasoning behind such statements; the acts they refer to are best maintained by an expected positive effect. "Deserving" a bullet sounds suspiciously like retribution (a judicial concept which anarchists cannot happily accept), whereas an "act of resistance" is functional only insofar as it lessens

oppression or heightens conscious rebellion. Critics of "acts of resistance" - meaning in this context pre-revolutionary acts of clandestine violence - challenge its promotion on the levels of indiscriminacy, inefficacy, and vanguardism.

In neither the primary anarchist literature covered, nor the interviews, were there to be found positive portrayals of indiscriminate violence in the style of the I.R.A. at Enniskillen, or E.T.A.'s Barcelona supermarket bomb. Their cause may (or may not) be seen to be valid, their assassinations applauded, but their less discriminate acts are denounced or ignored. Apologists of the self-declared anarchist bombers argue defensively, and with *some* justification, that they aimed to be as discriminate as possible (such as the Angry Brigade, Weir, 1985, pp. 10, 20), or calculated on property damage only (such as the Vancouver 5, Hansen, 1984, p. 4). The advent of a modern Emile Henry would undoubtedly bring far more cries of "misguided or crazy," and "*agent provocateur*," than claims of kinship from the English-speaking anarchist press.

It is noted that past anarchist experiences with acts of clandestine violence have not proved particularly healthy in terms of propaganda or consequent repression (Hill, 1989). Discriminate assassinations by anarchists, while removing individual oppressors, have not significantly lessened repression or increased rebelliousness. Violent propaganda-by-the-deed has not proved a very effective method of communication with the populace at large partly because of state media manipulation and partly because of the ease with which it is misinterpreted anyway:

> Because people have not been convinced, through education and their own experience, that anarchism is desirable, they cannot interpret terrorist activities in the way guerrillas would like (Hill, 1989, p. 7).

In addition, many anarchists are concerned that previous massive state repression has helped crush budding anarchist movements: for instance the Haymarket Massacre and the decline of American anarchism, or the nineteenth century German experience.

Policies such as the strategy of tension that was behind much of the theory of the rightist and leftist European terrorist movements in the 1970s and 1980s (of which the anarchically-influenced 2nd June Movement and Action Directe appeared to take part) are condemned across the board as counter-productive. The principal challenge is that in industrialised countries terrorism leads to the (expected) repression, but very little else. The anti-terrorist argues that popular rebellion, in the unlikely event that it *is* stoked by the repression, is also apt to be crushed by it, along with the parallel legal movement: take the Tupamaros' and the elimination of the left in Uruguay (Cullen, 1992b, p. 8; 'You can't blow...', 1990, pp. 8, 12-4). Moreover, policies such as the strategy of tension are extremely cynical tools:

> It is the ultimate in manipulation - an intentional attempt to create suffering among the people for the ends of the guerrillas who assume that they know best and that the people will be better off in the long run ('You can't blow...', 1990, pp. 13-4).

The cynicism of the strategy of tension is one symptom of the greater doctrinal criticism of acts of clandestine violence: that they are the methods of vanguardists. The allegation of vanguardism, or elitism, is a highly charged one. It suggests that the group assumes responsibility to act on behalf of the people, without their consent, on the basis of higher political consciousness: a complete rejection of anarchist organisational theory ('You can't blow...', 1990). It is not easy for any clandestine group to refute the accusation. No matter how noble their aims might have been, Brown notes of the Angry Brigade that "in direct contradiction of their spoken ideals they were trying to act

as an elite vanguard leaving ordinary people as passive spectators" (1984, p. 1). Editorial teams of periodicals (such as *Black Flag*) which condone the actions of the clandestine anarchist groups do not focus clearly on their elitism. Jean Weir is unusual in arguing for the recognition of the role of the individual (or group) conscience in the mass movement (1985, p. 7). The routine argument diverts attacks by lambasting the timidity of the open anarchist and leftist movement (Weir, 1985, pp. 9-10).

A third instance of pre-revolutionary violence that requires attention is mass civil disorder or riot. Politically motivated rioting does not suffer the elitist potentials of clandestine violence, but neither is the mob as easily coordinated as the tight-knit cell. A number of anarchist periodicals have printed riot tips (see *Wind Chill Factor* 7; *Autognome* 4; *Xtra!* 7) and espoused the idea that rioting is a positive way of "gaining confidence and experience" ('Backlash', 1981, p. 4). One of the most expressive positive appraisals for rioting comes from *Attack*:

> Seeing the cops tremble is a sight never to be forgotten. REVENGE! Exhilaration and pleasure! But we can go further. We can try to make our areas permanent no-go areas for our enemies, and build up our strength as communities. A riot is a step towards this. A practical lesson in community power ('Dancing in the...', n.d., p. 8).

Apart from the observation that in a riot it is quite difficult for anarchists to distinguish politically motivated activity from "gratuitous violence," riots "give the state an excuse to [portray] themselves to the mass population as their protectors" ('The futility of...', 1992, p. 23). The rioting anarchists (or for that matter terror groups) have, in the prevailing pre-revolutionary conditions, neither the medium of disseminating the reasoning behind the violence, nor a

population "conscious" enough to interpret such acts positively in the face of the contrary message of the state's media.

Propagandist Literature and Nonviolent Revolution

The arguments for a nonviolent method of securing social change range from the tactical preference of the non-pacifist to the deontological moral principle held by the absolutist pacifist. There is little natural affinity between these two extremes, but they are linked in the steps from absolutist to quasi-absolutist, to strategic pacifist, to non-pacifist tactical supporter of nonviolence. While strategic pacifists may appear to have a closer affinity to those whose actions are determined primarily by practical considerations rather than ethical ones, the fact that they view themselves as pacifists points to their inclusion within the sphere of those for whom no violent "short-cuts" could appear attractive.

Some anarchists argue (interviewee Rob for instance) that it is of paramount importance to expose the negative attributes of the state by the act. However, in all of the periodicals which approached the subject, opinions were expressed - explicitly or tacitly - that the population have to know not only that present governments are bad, but also that anarchism is good. The first step of the anarchist is always a personal one: recognising one's own capacity for self-government. Ronald Sampson notes that,

> one person who is not controllable by "authority", who answers not to externally imposed discipline but to the discipline of his or her own conscience, is a very potent threat to those who dominate others (1985, p. 12).

Where strategists of violent revolution see this as a first step to a conscious revolutionary mass, anarcho-pacifists tend to promote

individual conscious acceptance of anarchism as the sole means of change.

Anarcho-pacifists may counsel both a proselytory role and practical action. The most straightforward are persuasion by education and argument (Cullen, 1992a, p. 8). A further step is the attempt to sideline the state not just consciously, but also practically. Pike (1990) advocates the passive method of refusing to cooperate with certain functions of the state. Clark (1981) encourages the creation of parallel organisations (such as food cooperatives), to prepare people actively for the practicalities of the post-state world. The idea that normative and prescriptive lifestyles should be as indistinguishable as possible - lifestylism - is robustly asserted (Pike, 1990, pp. 41-8; Sampson, 1985, p. 24)

Anarcho-pacifists in the Tolstoyan tradition forego all explicit recourse to violence, force, coercion, or manipulation. While this is congruent with elementary anarchist ideals, the true resource is Christian deontological morality (Sampson, 1985, p. 6). Non-pacifists tend to respond with consequentialist and judicial arguments over the justifiability of violence: the beneficial utility accruing from killing a homicidal oppressor; the greater justice in the death of oppressors rather than the oppressed (Borrows, 1992b, p. 3). Non-pacifists also detest what they see as the unnecessary degree of introversion in anarcho-pacifists. Anti-nuclear demonstrator Jonika Mountainfire writes: "I found that the more committed people were to pacifism, the less committed they were to a meaningful social transformation" (1984, p. 6).

Anarcho-pacifists maintain other more consequential reasons for refuting violent revolution. Pike notes that:

> People who behave badly ... often say that the ends justify the means. But this is impossible because the means we use determine the ends we reach (1990, p. 18).

Pike uses a rather poor analogy to illustrate this: that in order to make a car one carefully constructs, one does not destroy (the simple reply being that anarchists are not making the car from scratch, but are given an armoured vehicle which requires deconstruction). Cullen postulates that "you don't make anarchists by killing people, you make killers and dead people" (1992c, p. 8). Sampson notes further complications of playing with power:

> It is from this element of force, of coercion, that all the resentment and counter-irritants and desire for vengeance - in short, evil - are triggered off. It is previous power - a legacy of countless acts of power - that has made the present oppressors or aggressors what they are... (1985, p. 11).

The sum of these aphoristic arguments, then, is that violence does not incline one's opponents to anarchism, rather it stokes up hate in them, and brutalises the supposedly loving and caring revolutionists.

Not a great deal is said in the literature by the strategists of violent revolution on the question of the resentful ex-ruling class in the aftermath. The assumption seems to be that they will be dead, exiled, or re-educated. In response to the proposition that violence is corrupting, Birrell quite simply answers that it is not (1992c, p. 7). Again, this is a point debated upon largely with anecdotal evidence, of which there is plenty.

The other side of nonviolent revolution is the grey area of nonviolent direct action. A first point is that for some activists nonviolence is a strategy to be pursued until such time that anarchist revolutionaries can face the state with arms. A second is that for those committed to a nonviolent strategy, this may mean strictly "not violence."

Coercion and manipulation are not shunned in many instances of nonviolent campaign. Indeed, it may not be possible to avoid them; hence anarcho-pacifists like Pike (1990) and Sampson (1985) refrain from

advocating nonviolent direct action. The general strike is a nonviolent method which does not expect to *persuade* capitalists of the righteousness of the strikers. Vandalism of the economic infrastructure, advocated spiritedly in *Green Anarchist*, is expected to cause hardship, confusion and expense, not enlightenment. Even Gandhi would have been disingenuous in suggesting that, in practice, his non-cooperation campaigns achieved more from truth force than coercion. Strategists of violent revolution have not stressed the moral ambiguity of a manipulative, destructive, or coercive, but decidedly nonviolent strategy - perhaps because they are themselves on similarly anomalous ground. Rather they accent the insufficiency of nonviolent direct action to overcome governmental resistance. In emphasising nonviolent policy *Class War* asserts: "A possibly powerful and effective group make themselves.... a nuisance not a threat" ('Class War - Macho?', n.d.).

One of the main objections to nonviolent direct action in the propagandist literature is that it provokes the state to respond, yet is ill-equipped to deal with a repressive backlash: "Pacifism doesn't stop violence, it simply leaves the stage clear for those who wish to indulge in it" (Birrell, 1992b, p. 8). However, part of the argument for nonviolent direct action is that it is not seen by the populace to justify violent repression, which, if it occurs, tends to increase sympathy with the victims. As noted above, if the state uses its overwhelming military superiority, the choice between tactical violence or nonviolence is most logically decided on the basis of which is likely to produce least repression, or the best propaganda, not the most glorious or costly martyrdom.

The avoidance of violence alone may be religiously or morally based, but nonviolence is often touted on the tactical basis of the expected ineffectiveness or unacceptable cost of a violent campaign

(Gambone, 1990, p. 5). If it could be shown that the state's armed forces would crumble at the first violent assault, and that such an assault would undoubtedly cause fewer deaths and less suffering than the state would have generated in the near future, tactical nonviolence should logically be supplanted by revolutionary violence.

For anarcho-pacifists of the Tolstoyan tradition there can be neither bartering with other people's lives, nor postponement of enacting anarchist precepts of the hideousness and irrationality of the use of power. Anarchists interested in anarchy rather than bravado, glory, or struggle cannot fail to accept the desirability of social transformation by the awakened consciousness of all. However, many non-pacifist anarchists contend that such is impossible, not least because economic and political power is seen to be intoxicating and addictive. They accuse the anarcho-pacifists of reformism and "militant liberalism" ('Anarchism and pacifism', 1987, p. 4).

Anarcho-pacifists in the propagandist literature do tend to suggest that for the foreseeable future, anarchy is more a state of mind than a possible social reality. On the other hand non-pacifist anarchists leave the door open for accelerated movement to anarchy, whether by violent insurrection, reactive defence, nonviolent direct action, or a combination of these. They predicate this on the consequentialist basis of a calculation of the means being justified by the end (though this seldom appears a seriously considered calculation). The anarcho-pacifists utterly reject this as doctrinally anomalous and morally unacceptable.

The study of propagandist material does not only address a different (though not exclusively so) subject group, it also gives a different slant on issues concerning violence, nonviolence, and social

change. Where the interviews ascertained how activists deal with the issues when faced with them, an analysis of the periodicals and pamphlets indicates to what extent propagandists approach such issues when unsolicited by a researcher.

While violent incidents involving anarchists were frequently and assiduously reported, this was rarely accompanied by moral or ideological analysis. In periodicals not specifically pacifist in outlook debate both over the process of social transformation, and the acceptability of violence as a tool of anarchists, occurred (regularly, if not frequently) primarily at the instigation of pacifist correspondents. The prompting of discussion over the ethics of violence by pacifist contributors certainly made it the most consistent topic of debate over the 1980s and early 1990s. Nevertheless, such matters could hardly be described as top of the agenda for the non-initiating non-pacifist propagandists. It does not seem likely that the primary reasons for this are because the non-pacifists find the question of consistency an insuperable problem that is best ignored, or because they are assured of the righteousness of their stance. More likely it is because they believe that the pacifists have more inconsistencies with their arguments than they do. In any case the non-pacifists are in the happy position of knowing that the majority of their readers (in varying proportions according to the nature of the periodical) are themselves confirmed non-pacifists. Where debate took place in the pages of the papers (the best example being the *Freedom* debate between May and October 1992) the various contributors appeared unable to shift each other from entrenched positions. Most of the arguments could be seen to fly over the heads of the protagonists in barrages of aphorisms and empirical observations ever more repetitively.

The evidence of the propagandist sources differed from the activist statements principally in terms of form rather than content. The pacifists were found to be much more articulate and comprehensive on paper than when interviewed. The non-pacifist contributors' predominantly sober reflections were spiced with occasional tirades in the pages of some of the activist-oriented periodicals more brazen and bellicose than the most intense respondent.

When issues concerning the justification of violence were raised the drift of the content of the contemporary propagandist material was not significantly different from the testimony given in the interviews. The pacifists believed either that violence was too unethical to contemplate, or that it could not produce the desired end of peaceful anarchy. The non-pacifists believed almost without fail that violence was a necessity for successful social revolution, but were animated more by the question of struggle, resistance, and preparation rather than revolution. Indiscriminate clandestine violence was roundly condemned; support for defensive and empowering violence was given in varying proportions.

CHAPTER 5 HISTORICAL AND DOCTRINAL PERSPECTIVES

In this chapter I seek to review some of the relevant issues concerning the anarchist view of violence and social change. In the first section I examine the ways in which several historical theorists of anarchism or proto-anarchism (I do not seek to get involved too deeply in the debate of who exactly were the great anarchist theorists; see Eltzbacher, 1972; Fleming, 1979, pp. 19-22; Crowder, 1991, pp. 2-3) deal with the question of violence and social change. The failure to glean great enlightenment from this is reflected in the concern of the third section, which addresses logical and ethical problems facing those who would procure social change. In the second section I look at how anarchists, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, experimented with individual acts of clandestine violence. I find that the "era of *attentats*" experienced in a number of countries was, on balance, a source of disutility to anarchist movements. Great lasting harm and clandestine violence are not, however, indivisible; the degree of disutility experienced is found to be dependent on several other conditions.

Anarchist Theorists on Violence

An initial impression may be derived from surveying both the theorists of anarchism and their interpreters that the issue of violence is not an important consideration. For one group of theorists, the philosophical anarchists, the development of a sturdy systemic critique is the primary concern. In order to encourage popular interest in socio-political alternatives they determine and advertise the flaws of the existing arrangement. The visionaries of new worlds, such as Peter

Kropotkin, sketch drafts of the future, and argue the extent of what is possible. Neither group is expansive on the question of change that links their philosophising and theorising. One should not really expect those who delve into the unknown, be they philosophers or scientists, to commit themselves to a particular course which they cannot know to be certain. However, criticising and dreaming is sterile unless there is some means of bridging the chasm from what is to what ought to be. In this section I look at how William Godwin, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Michael Bakunin, Peter Kropotkin and other theorists have looked at the vexing question of violence.

Godwin's most important contribution to the early formulation of anarchism was his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, a general review and critique of concepts of government, society, and property. Two of the eighty-five chapters deal with the ideas of effecting resistance or change (1985, Book IV, Chs. 1 & 2, pp. 255-81). Proudhon's critique and vision are expanded in the *Federal Principle, What is Property*, and the *General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*. His most incisive comments on the question of violence are to be found in *La Guerre et la Paix* and on revolutionary violence in the *General Idea*... (1970, pp. 159-61; 202-14).

The insurrectionist and arch-conspirator Bakunin's writings on violent revolutionary activity are as fragmentary as everything else he considered (1964, pp. 372-80). Kropotkin, scientist and propagandist, produced the most enduring popular works of the early anarchists: *Conquest of Bread; Mutual Aid; Fields, Factories and Workshops*, and others. Consciousness of ethical questions relating to revolution and the *attentats* pervade many of his letters, pamphlets, and articles (Kropotkin, 1927, pp. 34-43; M.A. Miller, 1976, pp. 206-7, 174-5; Cahm, 1989, p. 207).

On the ethical justification of the use of violence for political and social change William Godwin remained largely congruent with his basic humanist concepts. If, as he held, people would one day conduct their affairs entirely rationally then it seemed logical that the more one aspired to this goal the more change would be effected by rational persuasion. The use of force or coercion to effect change was an indication of the imperfect rationality of the user. If a rational goal encountered resistance which required force to overcome it, this was an indication that the resisters were insufficiently prepared for interrelationships based on reason:

> No people are competent to enjoy a state of freedom who are not already imbued with a love of freedom. The most dreadful tragedies will result from an attempt to goad mankind prematurely into a position, however abstractedly excellent, for which they are in no degree prepared (1985, p. 262).

Godwin was not, however, by any means a pacifist. On the matter of self-defence he maintained a consequentialist stance, both in regard to individual assault and collective oppression. A violent or coercive act against an individual attacker or government oppression demanded the calculation of the "benefit or mischief to result" (1985, p. 265). The calculation for a collective case was regarded by Godwin to be far more serious than an individual one. Godwin does not accept the idea that a population lacking the consciousness of rationality can or should be "freed" by the act of revolution. Nor does he see that an act of revolution is necessary where the massed population and the ruler's putative supporters defect to the side of liberty, for clearly the ruler maintaining no popular support could no longer rule.

Yet while Godwin appealed to the effect of time on ignorance and malevolence - even should it take generations of "flux and reflux" (1985, p. 279), so pessimistically did he generally view the effects of violence - he accepted that, having been so historically important,

bloody revolution might prove unavoidable among the impatient. In such a case Godwin thought that rational thinkers should not turn their back on the irrational acts of their fellows, but capitalise on the positive effects and ameliorate the negative ones (1985, pp. 280-1).

Proudhon lauded the positive influence that war had had on human progress:

> War, we greet you! It was war that enabled man to assert majesty and valor when he had scarcely emerged from the primeval slime (1970, p. 203, from *La Guerre...*).

Despite his exhortations as to the vigour that war lent to peoples, Proudhon also believed that it was no longer justified between nations - heroic and virtuous struggles for ideals having been superseded by grubby economic wars. Proudhon's rather confusing prescription for this was the pursuit of economic equilibrium and eternal peace through the actions of the workers (1970, p. 214; Hyams, 1979, pp. 246-7).

In the face of the coming revolution Proudhon's advice to the advocates of government was to "give way to it inch by inch so that instead of proceeding by leaps and bounds, humanity's eternal evolution may proceed imperceptibly and without causing an upheaval" (1970, p. 159). Given his belief in the potential rationality of all and the example of the French Revolution, his personal desire was justice for all rather than retribution against former oppressors. He maintained that government's best course of action was the gradual acceptance of reform so that pressure for immediate and violent revolution should not build up. However, he bemoaned the thought that those in government, by dint of "vested interest and pride of the government," were not wise enough to grasp the best course of action for all and thus the eventual result was invariably violent revolution (1970, p. 160).

The destruction of property and loss of life encountered in the act of revolution were anathema to Proudhon. However, the theory of

polemical historical progress ascribed to him by de Unamuno (1974, p. 78) and Edwards (Proudhon, 1970, pp. 20-1) meant that there was, for him, no point in moralising against violent revolution. All the conscious could hope to do was attempt to awaken agents of injustice to their peril. Proudhon's judgement on the act of revolution as a "jolt" rather than the essence of systemic change (as he believed Marx held) mirrors a great number of the statements from Chapters 3 and 4 which subordinate the *revolutionary* significance of the act of revolution itself (Proudhon, 1970, p. 151).

Unlike Proudhon, Bakunin encouraged aspects of psychological and physical preparation for revolution, in some ways a reflection of the audience the two men sought. Crowder describes Bakunin's - and Kropotkin's - positive conception of revolution as a cathartic necessity in the transition from the state to anarchy and contrasts this with Proudhon's muted hope for institutional reform (1991, p. 148). Bakunin's most infamous comment on revolution was made during the height of his involvement with Ruge's radical Hegelians:

> Let us put our trust in the eternal spirit which destroys and annihilates only because it is the unreachable and eternally creative source of all. The passion for destruction is also a creative passion (Carr, 1975, p. 10).

Given that this was made more than twenty years before his adoption of a consistently anarchist line this should not be given the prominence it frequently is in determining the anarchist Bakunin.

Certainly Bakunin remained consistent in the belief that those who wished to create a new society would possess a passion for the destruction of the old. By destruction Bakunin primarily meant property rather than people. If, as Crowder believes, a cathartic effect was to be had it would not be at the expense of others' lives:

> A rebellion on the part of the people, which by nature is spontaneous, chaotic and ruthless, always presupposes a vast

> destruction of property. The working masses are ready for such sacrifices (1953, p. 380, from *Statism and Anarchism*).

Destruction, though necessary, was not revolutionary *per se*. The real motive of the urge to destroy was a revolutionary vision of constructiveness and a desire for freedom (1964, p. 381).

Bakunin expected that the act of revolution would cost lives, for the supporters of the state would defend their interest. Nevertheless he had bemoaned the failure of mankind to develop an alternative means of systemic change, much as had Proudhon: "Of course it is a pity that humanity has not yet invented a more peaceful means of progress, but until now every forward step in history has been achieved only after it has been baptized in blood" (1964, p. 372, from the *Bear of Berne...*). Again, somewhat to the contrary of Crowder's catharsis argument was Bakunin's lack of interest in wreaking vengeance on the bourgeoisie, for the revolution "need not be vindictive nor bloodthirsty" (1980, p. 421, from *Philosophical Considerations*). Nor was extinguishing the memory and resentments of the bourgeoisie by executing them part of Bakunin's blueprint of revolution: "... after having assured your victory and having destroyed the power of your enemies, show yourselves humane toward the unfortunate stricken-down foes...recognize them as your brothers..." (1964, p. 377, from the *Circular to Italian Friends*).

Kropotkin also saw the act of revolution as a necessary part of the changing the social order, and thought it bizarre that anyone might believe that fundamental systemic change could take place "without so much as jarring the dishes on their dinner tables" (1972a, p. 113). In attempting to lump him in with fellow "later anarchist" Bakunin, Crowder sees too much sinister intent in Kropotkin (1991, p. 150). Rather, the evidence Crowder presents suggests a theorist resigned to the necessity of violent revolution, hoping for the minimum of casualties and retribution: "The question is, then, not so much how to avoid

revolutions as how to attain the greatest results with the most limited amount of civil war, the least number of victims, and a minimum of mutual embitterment" (Kropotkin, 1899, p. 77).

The most touted disparities that are found with Kropotkin are his connections with the formulation of propaganda by the deed and consequent partial responsibility for the era of *attentats*. Association with propaganda by the deed of the Malatestan kind is not the kiss of death, but it does indicate a readiness to use lethal violence just for educative purposes. Promoting individual clandestine violence leads every Marxian to point out that such a method completely misunderstands the nature of the system.

To what degree Kropotkin should be associated with propaganda by the deed is a subject of some disagreement. Martin Miller declares that Kropotkin seriously took up the idea. Miller cites as evidence an infamous joint article with Brousse in *Bulletin* in August 1877, and Kropotkin's programme enunciated at the Jura Federation congress at Fribourg in 1878. To balance this is the cautious hand Kropotkin laid on the 1881 London Congress despite the enthusiasm engendered by the Tsar's assassination. Cahm tends to give Kropotkin the benefit of the doubt, both in regard to the *Bulletin* article (where she accepts his later testimony that Brousse wrote it alone), and his intellectual commitment. She suggests that Kropotkin was never particularly interested in propaganda by the deed: "For him an act undertaken either as a lesson in anarchist ideas or as a publicity stunt was both morally and tactically bankrupt" (1989, p. 271). Cahm interprets Kropotkin's ideal pre-revolutionary activity to be a combination of theoretical propaganda and serious insurrectionary deeds (1989, pp. 102-13). If Cahm's is the closer assessment it is a very fine thing. Kropotkin's excitability and ambiguity on the eve of the era of *attentats*, may lead to either

interpretation, particularly if one looks at the *Spirit of Revolt* (1927, p. 40; see also Avrich in Kropotkin, 1972a, p. 11).

Kropotkin's flirtations with individual clandestine violence reflected firstly an enthusiasm for an apparently successful short-term tactic against despots and secondly an apology for its later employment. It was never his considered opinion that the *attentats* could encourage wider revolutionary activity. Though he was ultimately disapproving of the *attentats* he, among others, could not condemn the *Attentäter*.

After flirting with the idea of education as the fundamental of consciousness raising, Elisée Reclus, a contemporary of Kropotkin and fellow famous geographer, became one of the foremost theorists of propaganda by the deed. Reclus' conclusions on the question of violence were quite elemental in that he promoted the naturalness of anger and violence of a people becoming conscious of the grave injustices to which they were subject. Though wishing vengeance could be avoided by the no means rational masses Reclus noted: "if whole classes and populations are unfairly used, and have no hope of finding in the society to which they belong a redresser of abuses, is it not certain that they will resume their inherent right of vengeance and execute it without pity?" (Fleming, 1979, p. 175).

Reclus considered the terrorist phase of propaganda by the deed to be a part of an era of instinctive rebellion rather than the strategy of conscious anarchists (Fleming, 1979, pp. 176, 210). To condemn the anarchist *Attentäter* would be to side with the oppressors, and the motivation was more important than the act - and to want to be rid of an oppressor was a good motive. The more conscious an anarchist a rebel became the more that rebel would be able to gauge when to stop using force, that is, when it became reactionary. For Reclus the morality of propaganda by the deed, judged by act rather than rule, was based on two

things: motive and intellectual development. Fleming, Reclus' modern English-language interpreter, also notes that Reclus never saw violence as desirable, only inevitable (1979, p. 211). Though conscious anarchists would see the word as a more effective propaganda tool, they might not discount the discriminate use of violence in a revolutionary context.

Two anarchists who represent reasonably well the twentieth century non-pacifist anarchist consideration of violence are Alexander Berkman and Nicholas Walter. In the seminal *ABC of Anarchism* Berkman attempts to divorce violence from any special connection with anarchism (1942, pp. 11-7). While denouncing violence as barbaric he explains that anarchists are subject to the same socialisation as others, so it should not be unexpected that they should at first adopt the barbaric methods of others. By this he defends the *fin de siècle attentats* and bombings with which he was involved as having possibly been "justified and useful in the past" as ameliorating or inspirational (1942, p. 14).

Despite the need to rationalise his past Berkman was certain that the *attentats* were no key to revolutionary social change. He agrees with Godwin that "a change must *first* take place in the ideas and opinions of the people" (1942, p. 49). The Russian Revolution had failed because the people were insufficiently conscious to desire individual sovereignty. Berkman concurs with Proudhon that in revolution "the fighting phase of it is the smallest and least important part" (1942, p. 52). Violence in the revolution was to be used only against irreconcilable and dangerous statists; the preservation of a martial mentality was counter-revolutionary.

Walter's *About Anarchism* shares with the *ABC of Anarchism* the concept of necessity: "the inevitable violence occurs when the people shake off their rulers and exploiters" (1969, p. 14). Walter recognises

that violence is not to be eagerly anticipated, for in his opinion it is a blight on the consistency of anarchism. "Violence might be necessary for the work of destroying the old system, but it was useless and indeed dangerous for the work of building a new system" could be the refrain of the mid to late twentieth century non-pacifist anarchist.

Anarcho-pacifist contribution to the subject is actually quite poor. Whilst pacifism is a reasonably well documented subject its contributors usually write within the context of opposing war and militarism. The anarcho-pacifists appear prepared to subsume their anarchist disposition to the pacifist one. When Paul Nursey-Bray's excellent bibliography of English language anarchist literature comes to pacifism it details mostly the works of, and studies on, Tolstoy and Gandhi, who while they shared some anarchist characteristics were not professed anarchists.

Redpath claims that "the mature Tolstoy taught anarchism" (1960, p. 23). Actually this was just a by-product. Tolstoy's social thought derived from an interpretation of the teaching's of Christ that demanded inner harmony and the love of one's enemies. Pacifistic non-resistance was at the Tolstoyan core. Tolstoy rejected government as well - but primarily because much of the purpose of governments as he saw it was the performance of acts of violence, coercion and retribution (Tolstoy, 1960).

The Tolstoyan goal was a personal moral transformation, the success of which was marked by one's own inner harmony. The conversion of others might be pursued only by methods consistent with an individual's inner harmony: example, persuasion and non-resistance. Only good was morally equal to challenging evil - evil could not challenge evil. To maintain his consistently absolutist line Tolstoy had to oppose the violence of liberators as of oppressors. Woodcock, however, believes

that Tolstoy viewed popular violence as only partly evil, stemming as it did out of ignorance rather than design (Woodcock, 1979, p. 217).

Gandhi's ideal was "a state of enlightened anarchy in which each person will become his own ruler" (1987, p. 602). Yet while he stated that he preferred "no rule" to "misrule" (1987, p. 595) Gandhi was no more an anarchist than Karl Marx. The road to enlightened anarchy was in his view best followed by respecting the existing authorities and nudging them toward reform:

> A civil resister is...a philanthropist and a friend of the State. An anarchist is an enemy of the State and is, therefore, a misanthrope (1958, p. 60).

Indeed, Gandhi sometimes viewed the term "anarchists" as synonymous with "terrorists" (1987, pp. 60, 553; 1958, p. 60).

Gandhi's disciples in the *sarvodaya* movement more closely parallel anarchism's immediate tensions with government in its encouragement of alternative institutions. Ostergaard and Currell find in Vinoba Bhave an ideological current on social change comparable to Godwin (1971, p. 39). Like Godwin, Bhave found that the ultimate *swaraj* (meaning, approximately, self-government) could only come when people were better educated and more conscious of their abilities than they are now. Education was the first thing on the agenda of the *sarvodaya* movement, and anarchy the very last. Bhave was critical of Marxism-Leninism for its desire to concentrate power before dissolution (Bhave, 1962, pp. 29-30). Nevertheless it is somewhat of a misnomer to label Bhave an anarchist as he, like Gandhi, accepted cooperation with government as integral to change.

Bart de Ligt, one of the successors of Domela Niewenhuis in the Dutch anarcho-pacifist movement, produced a milestone in strategic pacifist literature in his *Conquest of Violence*. The small section on revolution is unequivocally condemnatory of violent methods: "the blood

shed in a revolution is the sign of its imperfection," and "is bloody to the extent that it is badly prepared" (1989, p. 163). Full consciousness of the working masses was the key. But rather than the Tolstoyan interpretation of nonviolence, non-resistance, de Ligt approved of syndicalist industrial disruption and Gandhian civil disobedience. Should all the oppressed people in the world consciously apply themselves to nonviolent revolution, then the global state system would necessarily collapse, without shedding any blood of the defenders of the state (though he noted that some revolutionaries might be killed).

De Ligt was concerned that the use of violence by revolutionaries, whilst possibly "a secondary help," would dehumanise revolutionaries and be counter-revolutionary in so far as it was inconsistent with the goals of social revolution (1989, p. 162). Like the Woodcockian interpretation of Tolstoy, de Ligt says that the conscious anarcho-pacifist in a violent pre-revolutionary situation supports the revolutionaries rather than the reaction (in spirit, but not physically) because they are for revolution, though they fail to grasp the most effective means of change (1989, p. 171).

The classical anarchist theorists did not ignore the question of the morality and doctrinal validity of the use of violence as much as find it irrelevant. They maintained - through examining historical precedent, or theorising on the nature of political power or economic wealth - that violence in social revolution was inevitable. The ruling hierarchy would always defend their position to the best of their ability, necessitating the preparation of revolutionists to use violence (whether reactive or pro-active). Some theorists (Godwin for instance) believed that social transformation itself was a certainty. Given such conclusions moralising was thoroughly inappropriate.

Proudhon and Bakunin have been seen to glorify violence. Proudhon, with little reference to morality, asserted the positive part that violence had played in the general scheme of individual and historical development - but he did not revel in the idea of death and destruction in pursuing the path of revolution. In his capacity as a man of action and propagandist Bakunin did not shirk from the violence he considered inevitable. However, the murderous intent which it is suggested he displayed in his association with Nechaev is more than matched by his more sober concerns for fraternity and compassion. For all of the anarchist theorists violence was not seen to make the revolution - rather it was considered an unpleasant necessary by-product. Latter-day theorists have not embellished much on the classical conclusion of unfortunate necessity of violence in revolution.

Anarcho-pacifist theorists did not share this analysis of social revolution. Moreover, as they developed their stance primarily (but not exclusively) from religion and pacifism rather than anarchism, their agenda on moral issues was quite different from the non-pacifists. Though there is little evidence to prove the point, philosophical anarchists, who tend to share greater common heritage with non-pacifists than pacifists, surely derive their reservations over pursuing the road to anarchy as much from doubts over ideological consistency as practical concerns.

Anarchism and the Era of *Attentats*

The anarchist *Attentäter* of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had a disproportionately large effect both on society and the anarchist movement. It was not that there were very few

incidents performed by anarchists (or those who claimed to be anarchists) - Robert James' rather hopeful assertion that there were "(approximately) forty violent attacks" by anarchists from 1880 to 1912 (1985, appendix iv), pales beside Núñez Florencio's detailing of over a hundred bomb incidents (aimed overwhelmingly at property not people) in Catalonia alone between 1888 and 1909 (1983, pp. 191-7). Rather it was because the performers (as a percentage of the anarchist movement) and casualties (as a fraction of the period's violent deaths) were exceedingly few. It was the combination of the volume of incidents with the few notorious assassinations and infamous bombings that enabled the anarchist to be labelled terrorist. The fact that the vast majority of anarchists had nothing to do with either planning or supporting the bombs or the *attentats* was completely overlooked.

Anarchists were hundreds if not thousands of years removed from the invention of political assassination or indiscriminate sub-state killing (see Ford, 1985, chs. 2 & 5). They were not the only or the first people in the nineteenth century to use clandestine violence: monarchists, republicans, democrats, and constitutionalists all had. Nor did anarchist *Attentäter* use clandestine violence as part of a systematic revolutionary programme as had Russia's *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will), or the later Socialist Revolutionaries (Kirkham, *et al.*, 1969, pp. 427-9).

Indeed, the turn to individual violence needs explanation, for so much in anarchist theory implicitly appeared to reject its use. Incendiary anarchist literature had, in the years prior to 1881, made reference to clandestine violence but it was primarily written in bravado, to shock or excite (as it is today), with neither the authors nor their readers actually practising the deeds. The anarchists and socialist revolutionaries up to the 1880s had not been greatly

interested in clandestine violence because they had seen no reason to be; massive change had to involve a mass.

In this section I examine some of the important factors associated with the initial spread of anarchist involvement in clandestine violence. There are the failures of open revolutionary movements from the middle of the century to the Benevento uprising; the attraction to conspiracy and clandestinity in response to repression, exemplified by Bakunin; and the example of others, particularly *Narodnaya Volya* and their assassination of Alexander II. After these are taken into account I examine the history of the *attentats* in several of the front-line countries. Deterrence and retaliation are seen as the two most important motivations while revolutionary intent is but a minor factor. The political consciousness (or a psychological profile) of the *Attentäter* is hardly possible to determine in most cases as information about them is so sketchy. Finally I find little in common of the duration and form of conclusion of the *attentat* "era" in each country.

Causation

Propaganda by the deed developed from a number of sources. Perhaps most significant for anarchists was the reaction of Bakunin (fresh from his association with Nechaev) to the apparent collapse of the new French republican government in the face of the Prussian armies in 1870: "...from this very moment we must spread our principles not with words but with deeds, for this is the most popular, the most potent, and the most irresistible form of propaganda" (1980, pp. 195-6). In principle Bakunin maintained hope of practical victories rather than propaganda ones, and when the cantonalist insurrections in Spain (1873-4) collapsed he moved onto the developing situation in Italy. The mainsprings of the Italian movement, Malatesta, Cafiero, and Costa were involved in

insurrectionary uprisings in 1874 which failed, before militating toward the idea of the insurrection as propaganda for, rather than prelude to, revolution.

The insurrectionary incarnation of propaganda by the deed achieved its apex with its adoption by the Italians at the Congress of Florence in 1876, and its implementation in the Benevento uprising in 1877. Despite its unimpressive results the educational spirit of Benevento was applauded by Paul Brousse, an advocate of propaganda by the deed as early as 1873, in his *L'Avant-Garde*. It was Brousse, who provided the link between the revolutionary potential of insurrectionary propaganda and the attempted tyrannicides by Hödel and Nobiling on the Kaiser, and Moncasi on Alfonso XII of Spain in 1878 by applauding both (Cahm, 1989, pp. 86-7). Of the Moncasi *attentat* *L'Avant-Garde* commented that if successful it would have done "un grand service à la révolution" (Stafford, 1971, p. 124; but see also Dubois, 1894, p. 151 for *L'Avant-Garde* on the republican nature of regicide).

Where repressions and imprisonments in the most rebellious countries made the organisation of propagandistic uprisings impossible or their cost too high, the practitioners varied in response. Brousse and Costa opted for electoral possibilism, Malatesta maintained the value of insurrection, and others sought clandestine activity.

Secret societies found favour with several leading anarchists because of their anti-establishment history, practical successes and almost mystical appeal. Freemasonry provided the organisational blueprint for the later secret societies; the Sicilian *Mafia* (from the late eighteenth century) and the Neapolitan *Camorra* (from around 1820) both began as movements of rebellion and resistance. More relevantly the Italian *Carbonari* (also beginning around 1820) was a secret society chiefly intended to counter oppression by landowners. The *Carbonari* used

intimidation, blackmail, arson, violence, and murder against intransigent landowners and government officials. Organisationally, the *Carbonari*'s members could not opt out of the society on pain of death. The French *Charbonniers* were organised into cells so that no member knew more than twenty others (Hyams, 1975, pp. 53-4, 56-7).

Whether Bakunin's freemasonry encouraged his foundation of secret societies, or his interest in conspiracy made freemasonry appealing is a moot point. Either way his interest in conspiracy led to various attempts to form clandestine groups with himself at the centre. A Florentine Brotherhood emerged in 1864 and submerged in 1865 when Bakunin moved to Naples. The International Brotherhood which he developed there sought to imitate the organisation and ethos of allegiance of the *Carbonari* - cells and hierarchy, threats and vengeance against renegades - despite a negligible membership. Nevertheless, Bakunin made fantastic and unbelievable claims to its international appeal within a year (Carr, 1961, pp. 327-31). Perhaps the only real product of the organisation was Bakunin's 1866 *National Catechism* and *Revolutionary Catechism* (1980, pp. 76-101). Written as the Brotherhood's programme it has been described by Kaminski as "the spiritual foundation of the entire anarchist movement" (Bakunin, 1980, p. 73).

The Nechaev affair (1869-70) initially reconfirmed Bakunin's love of adventure, secrecy, and intrigue. Nechaev created out of thin air the same kind of revolutionary organisation that Bakunin had been dreaming of on a grander scale. Bakunin even created the World Revolutionary Alliance on the spot so that Nechaev could be its accredited Russian representative. He also collaborated with Nechaev on the most significant appeal to amoral terroristic methods, the 1869 *Catechism of a Revolutionary* (the actual authorship is debated; Carr, 1961, pp. 395-6, and Nettlau, 1924, p. 30 suggest Bakunin wrote it; Joll, 1979, p. 77,

Hyams, 1975, pp. 25-6, and most persuasively Avrich, 1988, p. 40, and Saltman, 1983, p. 13, that it was entirely or predominantly Nechaev's). The *Catechism* bore little similarity to anything Bakunin wrote before or after Nechaev. It shadows the vanguard revolutionary Tkachev and Ishutin's inner circle "Hell" in its contempt for anything less than total dedication not to a harmonious post-revolutionary future, but to nihilistic revolution alone. The *Catechism* is the handbook of the literal terrorist:

> He is not a revolutionary if he feels any sympathy for this world. He must not hesitate to destroy any position, any place, or any man in this world - all must be equally detested by him.... Above all those who are especially inimical to the revolutionary organization must be destroyed; their violent and sudden deaths will produce the utmost panic in the government... (Payne, 1967, pp. 174-5).

The cynical amorality of Nechaev was anathema to contemporaneous and later anarchists, but his fanatical logic had been allowed to make its mark. With the great revolutionary loudspeaker Bakunin as patron his voice was heard. His subsequent murder of a co-conspirator and his resilience (unto death) in the Peter-Paul Fortress directly inspired not only *Narodnaya Volya*, but also Lenin, the Black Panthers and the Japanese Red Army (Payne, 1967, pp. 230, 243; Avrich, 1988, pp. 50-1).

The most direct influence on the direction that some anarchist revolutionaries took in the face of the difficulties of insurrectionary propagandism was the example of other politically-motivated assassins and bombers. Clandestine violence by individuals and sub-state groups (commonly known as terrorism, though terror was only occasionally the explicit aim) was not a new phenomenon in the late eighteenth century, having been used by the weak against the strong at least as far back as the Zealot struggle against Rome (Laqueur, 1977, pp. 6-10; Ford, 1982, pp. 1-2). More recently Napoleon had been the subject of a number of

assassination attempts, and President Lincoln was just one of a number of victims.

However, it was a strand of Russian populism that provided some of the greatest impetus to the anarchist *attentats*. Populism was a disparate theme revolving around the rejection of both the *ancien regime* and the threatening bourgeois industrialisation, and the acceptance of a simple decentralised peasant/intellectual society (Berlin in Venturi, 1964, pp. vii-xi; Lampert, 1957, pp. 142-3). It emanated from the circles surrounding Herzen and Bakunin in the 1840s, Chernyshevsky and the nihilist Pisarev in the 1860s, and Tkachev and Lavrov in the 1870s (see Avrich, 1967, p. 36). It came to life in Serno-Solovevich's intellectual movement *Zemlya i Volya* (Land and Liberty; 1861-3); in Zaichnevsky's manifesto for Young Russia in 1862; in the "go to the people" movement inspired by Natanson and the Chaikovskists (1873-4); and the revolutionary organisation *Zemlya i Volya* (1876-9; Venturi, 1964). The repression of the "go to the people" movement signalled a recognition that open revolutionary movements could not hope to operate effectively. This came to a head in the split in *Zemlya i Volya* between the Chaikovskist-oriented *Cherny Peredel* and the urban *Narodnaya Volya*, whose medium-term goal was the assassination of Tsar Alexander II.

Where the 1866 attack on the Tsar by Karakozov and its consequent repression had done little to inspire and much to discourage (not Nechaev however), the 1878 *attentats* by Hödel and Nobiling, and attacks by elements of *Zemlya i Volya* on oppressive Tsarist officials attracted increasing anarchist interest in western Europe - if not uncritical support (Cahm, 1989, p. 86; Fleming, 1989, p. 204). Of immense inspiration was the successful assassination of Alexander II in 1881. This initial success was hailed as a heroic blow against tyrannical autocracy (Cahm, 1989, pp. 141-143; von Borcke, 1982, p. 48; Laqueur,

1977, p. 57). The subsequent arrest, imprisonment, and execution of the conspirators (and others) brought condemnation and sympathy from western socialist, and some liberal, opinion (Fleming, 1979, p. 205; Payne, 1967, pp. 286-9).

Although the assassination of the Tsar was audacious and succeeded in removing one head of state, it made way for a more despotic one - Alexander III - and a reaction which mortally wounded *Narodnaya Volya*. Having said that, it would be wrong to say a programme of assassination alone brought repression. The pacific open "go to the people" movement was similarly crushed. Moreover, clandestine violence played a significant, if less dramatic, part with the next generation of populists, the Socialist Revolutionaries.

The transfer of the Russian example to liberal democratic countries was not recommended by the *narodnovoltsy*. The surviving members wrote a letter of condolence on the occasion of President Garfield's assassination later in 1881:

> In a country where freedom allows the individual an honourable intellectual fight, where the free will of the people not only determines the law, but the persons in government; in such a country political murder as a combat method is a manifestation of the very same despotic spirit we have made it our task to destroy (von Borcke, 1982, p. 56).

This might be viewed as an expression of the soberness of the *narodnovoltsy*, or a gauge of their limited revolutionary aims - they were after all no anarchists. Western *Attentäter* might also like to proffer that the *narodnovoltsy* were displaying a critical unfamiliarity with the repressive capacity of the bourgeois democrats of the West. Many populists, among which were Kvyatkovsky and Zhelyabov (one of *Narodnaya Volya*'s conspirators), came to doubt the revolutionary import of the assassination of political figureheads under any regime. This,

however, has little significance for the later anarchist *Attentäter*; their deeds were acts of resistance rather than revolution.

A Selection of National Profiles of the *Attentats*

These then are the general components found prior to the anarchist grasping of the knife and the bomb: the apparent failure or cost of insurrectionary methods; the failure and cost of open movements such as the Chaikovskists; the continuing interest in some anarchist circles for conspiracy; the reinterpretation of propaganda by the deed to mean any symbolic gesture; and the exciting example of other European *Attentäter*, particularly the Russian populists.

Each country where anarchist *attentats* occurred had its own particular history or spark. Some "eras" lasted only two years, in others the method ebbed and flowed for decades. Each country saw a repression which varied greatly in permanence of success. In this subsection I examine the path of the *attentats* in *fin de siècle* Germany, France, and Spain, all of which were greatly affected. Although Austria might also count as an interesting case, there is unfortunately very little in English on that country's stormy period.

Ulrich Linse believes that the 1878 anti-socialist law, which made open agitation extremely difficult and hazardous *was* a major cause of the turn to terrorism in Germany (1982, p. 210). The anti-socialist law itself was a response to the *attentat* of Nobiling on the Kaiser. Two of the influential anarchists who took up the cudgel were August Reinsdorf and former SPD deputy Johann Most. Reinsdorf, whose circle had included Max Hödel, accepted the symbolism of propaganda by the deed, but was also driven by the idea of symbolic punishment of those responsible for the 1878 repression (Linse, 1982, p. 210). He planned, amongst other things, to combine these two inclinations in a spectacular bomb attack

at the dedication of the Niederwald Monument in 1883. Although the attempt failed Reinsdorf paid with his life. Most, who had so enthusiastically welcomed the Tsar's death that the British imprisoned him (Oliver, 1983, p. 18; Hyams, 1975, pp. 43-4) urged on German-speaking workers (1881-1885) in his organ *Freiheit*:

> We will murder those who must be killed to be free... We do not dispute over whether it is right or wrong. Say what you will, do what you do, but the victor is right. Comrades of "Freiheit", we say murder the murderers. Rescue mankind through blood, iron, poison, and dynamite (Carlson, 1982, p. 188).

Further urging of anarchist terror in Germany came from the establishment itself. Andrew Carlson details the elaborate machinations of the German police to maintain the anarchist threat in order to encourage governmental restrictions on all socialists (1982, pp. 185-7, 192). *Freiheit*'s "secret" distribution network was riddled with police agents, some of the most inflammatory articles were written by them, and it appears likely that it was secretly financially assisted by the police.

Perhaps to the dismay of Bismarck and the police, the attentats in Germany abruptly ended after the killing of Frankfurt Police Chief Rumpf in response to the Niederwald sentences. The reason for this was not repression but rather the *Bruderkrieg* (fraternal conflict) which enveloped the German-speaking movement in Europe. From 1884 the major issue was the conflict between collectivists and communists, between Most's *Freiheit* and the Bohemian Peukert's *Autonomie* (Trautmann, 1980, p. 172; Carlson, 1982, pp. 191-2).

Most was a formidable agitator among German speaking revolutionists in Europe and, upon emigration in 1882, in America. His major influence among foreign-born artisans and peasants turned-industrial workers in New York and other northern seaboard cities was, however, to be contrasted with shortcomings elsewhere (Perlman, 1966,

pp. 293-4; Sorge, 1977, p. 203). His incendiary writings could not have the same power in ethnically and socially diverse America as Germany. His collectivism and rejection of syndicalism also lessened his impact in many northern and mid-western cities.

Most was an inspiration to Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, who later attempted to assassinate union-buster Henry Frick (Goldman, 1934, p. 6). These, in turn, were to influence Czolgosz, the assassin of President McKinley (Trautmann, 1980, p. 213; Goldman, 1934, p. 311). Yet Most's writings did not consistently praise the *attentats*. Whether through jealousy or fear of imprisonment/expulsion Most repudiated the Berkman *attentat* in 1892, thereafter throwing the American anarchists into further confusion (as after the Haymarket Affair) and *Bruderkrieg* (Trautmann, 1980, pp. 203-5). Nor dared he applaud the McKinley assassination as he had that of Alexander II.

In France the build up to its era of *attentats* had been such that it is more a surprise that the explosion did not occur earlier. The concentration of advanced theorists and a large number of attentive, if independently-minded, *déclassé* followers is reflected in the mass of material inciting violence that had been produced by local *groupes d'affinité* for years (Dubois, 1894, p. 47). When the explosion did occur between 1892 and 1894 a sensationalist press, a sympathetic artistic elite, and an enthralled/appalled public ensured a comprehensive profile. *Attentäter* had declared themselves to be anarchists prior to this period (Chaves in 1884 and Gallo in 1886). However, it was François-Claudius Köningstein (or Ravachol), Auguste Vaillant, and Emile Henry who captured the spirit of the times - the loose spiritual confederacy of terrorist, thief, propagandist, and artist later reflected in the *Procès de Trente* in August 1894 (Sonn, 1989, pp. 18-9; Weber, 1986, pp. 119-20).

The period up to the capture of Ravachol involved a number of cases of violence linked with attempts at *la reprise individuelle*, the tactic of individual expropriation (or thefts from the bourgeoisie) exposed by Elisée Reclus in 1880 (Fleming, 1979, p. 195). Ravachol's final acts in 1892 were more in keeping with Spanish colleagues insofar as they were symbolic bomb attacks in retaliation for harsh punishment meted out to the May 1st 1891 demonstrators. In December 1893 Auguste Vaillant bombed the Chamber of Deputies, but killed no one. The repression that followed this act included the *lois scélérates* (villainous laws) which eventually made simple advocacy of anarchism illegal, and were responsible for the closure of *La Révolte* and *Le Père Peinard*. After the execution of Vaillant, Henry bombed the Café Terminus, to the horror of many. Rounding off the period in June 1894 an Italian, Santo Caserio, assassinated France's President Sadi Carnot as a response to the Vaillant execution (Goldman, 1969, p. 98; Sonn, 1989, p. 243, says Caserio was avenging Ravachol).

Various commentators disagree as to the emphasis that should be put to reasons for the end of the French era of *attentats*. Fleming stresses the strait-jacket the *lois scélérates* had placed on anarchist propagandism (1979, p. 214); Weber notes the loss of public sympathy in particular after Café Terminus bombing (1986, p. 117); Sonn suggests the relief of anarchists at the acquittals at the *Procès de Trente* (1989, p. 24). Part of the problem of propaganda by the deed was that it relied on publicity. If the dramatic political message of the anarchist *Attentäter* could be strangled - the anarchist press being gagged and Caserio put to death without a statement - much of the romance and point was lost.

If the police repression stopped the immediate round of attacks, it seems likely that it was the internal movement of the anarchists themselves that prevented the emergence of a new generation of

Attentäter. It was clear that the *attentats* had not advanced the development of the anarchist movement in France one iota. Figures such as Kropotkin, Grave, and Malatesta were thoroughly alienated (Tuchman, 1964, p. 457; Joll, 1979, pp. 127-8). Even the most optimistic of the theorist-propagandists, Reclus, was willing to believe that the lull signified a new level of consciousness (Fleming, 1979, p. 219). Moreover, the injection of the idea of syndicalism, propagated notably by Emile Pouget and practised by Fernand Pelloutier, opened up a challenging path to the anarchists, drawing them back to the dogged workers and away from the more romantic *déclassés*.

It is thanks, perhaps, to myopia and the media (their selectivity or incapability) that the *atentados* in Spain have received less attention than those of France. The French era was shorter in duration, with fewer activists, and resulted in fewer deaths on either side. Shadowy amateurish groups such as *Los Desheredados* (The Disinherited) and *Mano Negra* (Black Hand) sprang up among the largely peasant Andalusian anarchists in the early 1880s in response to the legalist approach of the *Federación de Trabajadores de la Región Española* (FTRE; which was controlled by the industrial north; Brenan, 1969, p. 159; Esenwein, 1989, pp. 84-6). These groups performed acts of coercion, arson, and assassination against local landowners. The exaggerated *Mano Negra* affair justified, for the authorities, an intense repression which crippled Andalusian anarchism for years (Bookchin, 1977, p. 108; Bernecker, 1982, pp. 104-5).

These earlier clandestine groups were local responses using retaliation or deterrence against economic targets. The era of *atentados* proper was marked by its combination of the more blunt retaliatory attacks with propaganda by the deed - the full force of the theory of

propaganda by the deed not having filtered down to Spain "until well into the 1880s" (Bookchin, 1977, pp. 116-7).

The initially low-intensity property-oriented bombings (Núñez, 1983, pp. 191-3) peaked in 1893 with Paulino Pallás' *atentado* against General Martínez Campos for the Jerez repression (Esenwein, 1989, pp. 184-5; Hyams, 1975, p. 112, wrongly states Pallás attacked Cánovas; Bernecker, 1982, p. 102, is incorrect in believing the general was killed). In response to Pallás' execution an acquaintance, Santiago Salvador bombed a Barcelona theatre killing fifteen. A return to the low-intensity bombing campaign was interrupted three years later. In June 1896 a bomb was thrown into the Barcelona *Corpus Christi* procession. That the bomb killed not the attending dignitaries but rather twelve common people gave many the impression that the person responsible was an *agent provocateur* (McCabe, 1909, pp. 57-61; Esenwein, 1989, pp. 184-5). In retaliation for the savage repression following the *Corpus Christi* bomb an Italian, Michele Angiolillo killed Spanish Premier Cánovas del Castillo. Public disgust at the *Corpus Christi* repression was such that there was little outrage at the death of the "doomed" premier; still less over the attempted assassination of one of the Montjuich prison torturers (the perpetrator of which, Ramón Sempau, was released without conviction).

After 1897 the *atentados* ceased. Esenwein suggests that the Corpus Christi persecution physically smashed the bombers' cells (1989, p. 199). If this is so, the idea remained alive for a new generation of *Attentäter* who emerged with a vengeance between 1904 and 1909, frustrated with the teething problems of anarcho-syndicalism. The *pistolerismo* of the early inter-war years marked the uncomfortable fusion of the *Attentäter* with anarcho-syndicalism.

The Nature and Intentions of the *Attentäter*

It is of some significance whether the *Attentäter* should be addressed as conscious anarchists (disregarding approval or disapproval), or as lunatics desirous of martyrdom, or authoritarian socialists. Solnemann for one posits the idea that anarchism and "terrorism" are logically incompatible and that the nineteenth century *Attentäter* were "partly pathological muddleheads or ideologically confused people with no idea of real anarchism...and partly fanatics whose real aim was a communism strictly opposed to anarchism" (1983, p. 197). It is unsurprising that both non-pacifist anarchists who support only reactive violence, and anarcho-pacifists reject a terrorist heritage. Though all the *Attentäter* so far examined claimed to be anarchists, their degree of consciousness of the baggage attached to that label is arguable.

Commentators point to the borderline personality of such as Gallo, the attacker of the Paris *Bourse* (Joll, 1979, pp. 110, 112). The poverty and disrupted family life of several of the *Attentäter* (for instance Ravachol) is frequently mentioned as the psychological root of their violence. Tuchman implies the importance of retaliatory frustration, Sonn of "oedipal revenge" (Tuchman, 1964, p. 444; Sonn, 1989, p. 245).

Although a psychological typology may be used as a way both to lambast anarchists and to vindicate the assassin, the expansive characteristics of the anarchist *Attentäter* defies the construction of a single typology (for an in-depth picture of four of the famous *Attentäter* see Longoni, 1970). The cluster of typologies necessary really render the exercise pointless. Emile Henry was from an educated bourgeois (though revolutionary) background, and extremely intelligent. Auguste Vaillant was a single parent employed in white-collar jobs, who had raised himself from a desperately poor childhood that began in an

orphanage. Alexander Berkman was well-educated and from an immiserated Jewish background. Gaetano Bresci was a silk-weaver, family man, and a witness of misery rather than its victim. Léon-Jules Léauthier was a level-headed workman. The *Desheredados* were peasants.

The acts themselves were not in any way uniform. Some acts were purely symbolic. Luccheni stabbed Elizabeth, the estranged Empress of Austria, in doubt over the arrival of his intended victim. Her lack of explicit political responsibility was unimportant for she was held merely to be a suitable example of the ruling class. Luccheni intended by his act to convey a message to ruler and ruled. To the rulers: beware, all are tacitly responsible for popular misery and therefore under sentence; to the ruled: the ruling class are not invulnerable. Léauthier prefaced his random attack on a Serbian minister by writing: "I will not strike an innocent in striking the first-come bourgeois" (Maitron, 1975, p. 229).

Similarly, other *attentats* were performed against leading political figures not because they had ordered a particular repression, or in retaliation for any particular event, but because they were the embodiment of political and economic domination. Umberto I was indifferent to the economic conditions of the common worker, but was no authoritarian tyrant. Gaetano Bresci chose him as his victim because of his symbolic leadership of the system which to Bresci brought nothing but *la misèria*. Bresci is one of the few *Attentäter* for whom there is evidence of a good degree of collusion (Woodcock, 1979, p. 326; Hyams, 1975, p. 118; but see also Goldman, 1969, pp. 103-5). Leon Czolgosz assassinated McKinley not because he was a particularly bad president, but because he was a president (Goldman, 1934, p. 317; Hyams, 1975, p. 120).

However, most anarchist assaults were upon those they held responsible for a particular act of repression against anarchists or workers: Pallás' attack on Martínez Campos was a reaction to his repression of the Jerez uprising; Salvador bombed the *Líceo* to avenge Pallás; Caserio killed Carnot because of Vaillant, and so on. Even Henry's bombing of the Café Terminus was predicated on the general responsibility of the bourgeoisie, rather than just its political representatives, for the Vaillant repression (Henry, 1983, p. 193).

It is impossible to know exactly how consciously anarchist most of the *Attentäter* were at the time of their acts. Some were undoubtedly very young and hot-headed, but many others could hardly come under the label of easily impressionable: Vaillant had edited anarchist newspapers; Reinsdorf had worked with Paul Brousse on the *Arbeiter Zeitung*. A common disposition among the *Attentäter* of which something is known (primarily from their trial testimonies) was their sense of outrage at the existing state of affairs. Henry noted the hypocrisy of a society which talked of justice and equality but in which he saw stark divisions of wealth and poverty (1983, p. 190); Caserio related his experiences of seeing poverty, starvation and misery (Goldman, 1969, p. 100). Driven by this sense of injustice they sought ideas of genuine change, eventually coming across anarchism.

The *attentats* were acts of those unwilling to witness injustice without combating it. Vaillant divided the exploited into the complacent and the aware: "Tired of leading this life of suffering and cowardice, I carried this bomb to those who are primarily responsible for social misery" (Goldman, 1969, p. 95).

If asked whether their acts were really appropriate responses the *Attentäter* coolly responded that their victims were not undeserving. A strong strain of retribution against society, or a particular class, ran

through their reasoning. Even if the *attentat* was for a particular repression, the persons who conducted or ordered that repression could not necessarily be regarded as wholly responsible. On his attitude towards his innocent victims Ravachol responded: "There are no innocent *bourgeois*" (Heppenstall, 1969, p. 20). Henry was not disturbed that his bomb at the Carmeaux mine offices had in fact only killed policemen, for they too were his class enemies. Nor was the arbitrary nature of the Terminus bomb felt unjustified: "...since you hold a whole party responsible for the actions of a single man, and strike indiscriminately, we also strike indiscriminately" (1983, pp. 194-5). Vaillant indicated his "satisfaction of having wounded the existing society, that cursed society in which one may see a single man spending, uselessly, enough to feed thousands of families" (Goldman, 1969, p. 93).

While Vaillant accepted that two wrongs did not make a right he defended his act as necessary self-defence. The lumbering giant had to be made aware of its destructive course, and he felt his bomb had the power to startle the bourgeoisie: "It takes a loud voice to make the deaf hear" (Goldman, 1969, p. 96).

Henry displayed the idea of deterrence, retribution, and propaganda all in one:

> I wanted to show the bourgeoisie that henceforward their pleasures would not be untouched, that their insolent triumphs would be disturbed.... At the same time I wanted to make the miners understand that there is only one category of men, the anarchists, who sincerely resent their sufferings and are willing to avenge them (1983, p. 193).

None of the *Attentäter* who were allowed a voice expected that their particular acts would have anything more than an inspirational effect upon the exploited. None were under the illusion that they would have revolutionary import. Each appeared very aware of the limits that an individual could have. Vaillant talked of the insignificance of his

act, and the court's punishment in comparison to the greater "cosmic forces" (Goldman, 1969, p. 97). Henry showed a remarkable awareness of the common criticism of the inability of most people to interpret a bomb as the bomber intended:

> I know my deeds will not yet be understood by the masses who are unprepared for them.... many, misled by your newspapers...will regard me as their enemy. But that does not matter. I am not concerned with anyone's judgement (1983, p. 196).

Henry fell prey, by this, of the criticism of vanguard individualism, to which he was similarly unconcerned.

The Reaction of Kropotkin and Reclus

Sources do not exist which tell us the attitudes of the anarchist movement as a whole on the matter of the *attentats*. Two of the leading anarchist theorist-propagandists of the day, Peter Kropotkin and Elisée Reclus are worthy of study not because they exactly reflect the movement, but because their stances through the era of *attentats* are interesting illustrations of the evolving attitudes of two survivors - both physically and ideologically - of the period. Moreover their ideas on the subject are well documented, unlike Grave or Malatesta, and their own writings (particularly Kropotkin) have less of an agenda than those of Goldman or the master propagandist Most.

Kropotkin is a model for the reaction of anarchists to the *attentats*. He was drawn to the question of regicide by the spate of *attentats* in 1878. At this point Kropotkin is found by Caroline Cahm to be sympathetic to the perpetrators of the exploits in Germany and Russia, be they acting out of desperation, or anti-autocratic intent (1989, pp. 108-10, 114). The assassination of Alexander II accelerated Kropotkin's interest in clandestine violence as a possible tool of revolution rather than the reactive last-ditch of the damned. Kropotkin wrote in *Le Révolté* that the *narodnovoltsy* had taken "an enormous step

toward the coming revolution in Russia" (M.A. Miller, 1976, p. 153). Yet in the 1881 London Congress Cahm finds it was Kropotkin's powerful influence that counterbalanced the more outrageous stance of such as Serreaux, later uncovered as a police spy (Cahm, 1989, pp. 154-8). At the Congress Kropotkin rejected the euphemistic call for research into "chemical studies," reiterating the power of verbal and written propaganda as well as that of the deed (M.A. Miller, 1976, p. 146; Cahm, 1989, p. 157).

It would not be unfair to say that in Kropotkin there could be found two forces, which were not necessarily mutually exclusive. He was consistent in his support for those whose acts were made out of desperation, or where there appeared no avenue of peaceful agitation (as he believed was the case in Russia). However, in the 1880s he increasingly began to feel that conscious anarchists should know better and work toward a collective approach. Cahm feels that Kropotkin's desire to emphasise the economic infrastructure was indicative of his ambivalence to attacks on the political structure, the result of which could only be a change in government (1989, p. 167).

Kropotkin approved of the assassinations of Carnot and Canovas as expressions of self-defence (or retribution) against repressive measures (Cahm, 1989, p. 207). However, he could not applaud the acts of violence associated with *la reprise individuelle* (particularly in the case of Ravachol) because they appeared to him to be indicative of an unhealthy egoism, and because he felt they had no revolutionary content. Likewise he rejected acts such as the *Líceo* theatre bomb in 1893 and the killing of Empress Elizabeth in 1898 because the victims were not apparently directly responsible for any outrage. He did not feel that revolutionary goals could be reached with terrorism, and condemned pro-active Russian anarchist terrorists in *Khleb i Volya* and *Khlebovoltsy* in 1904/5 (M.A.

Miller, 1976, pp. 206-7; Avrich, 1967, p. 60). Nevertheless, while he might not approve of their actions, he refused to condemn those he thought were driven by despair to commit brutal and unhelpful acts. Luccheni could not be blamed for he was "driven mad by horrible conditions" (M.A. Miller, 1976, p. 174).

David Miller unjustifiably lambasts Kropotkin as incapable of censuring brutal murderers. Kropotkin sought to divide the indefensible act from the defensible actor, an actor driven to act irresponsibly from desperation. Miller characterises Kropotkin's stand as "moral elitism" (1984, p. 120). He believes that Kropotkin really should have demanded that all act by the same moral standard he demanded of himself. Kropotkin was incapable of doing this because he recognised that he held his views only by the privilege of not having been exposed to the misery which he believed the *Attentäter* had been. It would have been pompous indeed for him to demand that all anarchists act as he did when he might well have acted as they did if he had had their experiences. Kropotkin was not one of those who, as Thomas Carlyle put it, "think that it is their virtue which keeps them from committing crime, when it's simply a full stomach" (Longoni, 1970, p. 51). Where Kropotkin failed himself was in not registering enough protest against acts which were in his opinion counter-productive to the anarchist cause.

Elisée Reclus, a scientist of Kropotkin's calibre, was one of the few anarchist theorist-propagandists to actively support *la reprise individuelle* (Fleming, 1979, p. 185). From this it was an easy step to accept that the assassin was one who refused to be the passive victim of oppression any longer. In striking at the oppressor he had become a primitive knight of justice. For Reclus, Ravachol was not a fully conscious anarchist, no matter how much he might have claimed the label. Nor was Ravachol acting immorally in robbing and killing, for Reclus

judged that his motivation was good, and that this was more important than the nature of the act.

Reclus' anthropological studies and adherence to the idea of progressive evolution, brought him to expect a degree of violence in the course of social change. Human consciousness and sophistication went hand in hand: those totally unconscious of oppression did not resist; primitive rebels resisted violently; conscious anarchists preferred persuasion to violence, but would never entirely rule out its use. The more the oppressed gravitated toward anarchist consciousness the less likely they would instinctively lash out. Symbolic violence, as experienced in the era of *attentats* was inevitable, but not commendable. Fleming writes that Reclus believed that a new level of consciousness had been reached at the end of the *attentats* in France in 1894, and that the revolutionaries were ready for a new stage in the struggle for change (Fleming, 1979, p. 219). Reclus was hardly as bloodthirsty as some of his detractors claimed. Certainly he could not abide the idea of conscious anarchists seeking vengeance in the revolutionary struggle, for this was utterly reactionary (Fleming, 1979, pp. 210-2).

The Part the *Attentats* Played in a Selection of Anarchist Movements

This subsection attempts to address two important questions regarding the significance of the *attentats*. Firstly, I investigate the degree to which the anarchist movements were immersed in the *attentats*. Were the *attentats* the main attraction or a side-show which stole the audience? The actual practitioners had an effect far beyond their numbers, but were they simply the tip of an iceberg? Secondly, to what degree were they to blame for the repression of popular anarchism?

Italy, with its history of terroristic secret societies, produced some of the most noted assassins: Caserio, Angiolillo, Luccheni, and

Bresci. Yet, although there were *attentats* in Italy, particularly in 1878, there was nothing on the scale of France or Spain. The insurrectionary influence of Malatesta and Cafiero must be considered as the nineteenth century zenith of the Italian movement. The leniency that the insurrectionists had received was replaced by an earnest repression for the *attentats* (though they were never directly linked to the anarchists) that saw the imprisonment, exile, or renunciation of the movement's leaders. The movement only regained vigour with the growth of syndicalism before the First World War.

The German anarchist movement came out least fortunately from its period of *attentats*. Nobiling's attempt in June 1878 and Reinsdorf's bomb at Niederwald in 1883 had allowed Bismarck to push through and renew anti-socialist laws which crippled the open movements of both the fledgling anarchists and socialists (Carlson, 1982, p. 178; Crankshaw, 1981, p. 345). *Freiheit* had to be produced in exile and smuggled in, groups were persecuted and infiltrated. Yet, although it was the effect of the *attentats* that prevented the spread of anarchism, it was actually the *Bruderkrieg* that, by 1887, had effectively broken their organisation.

In France the relatively small but influential anarchist movement (Woodcock, 1979, p. 276, estimates an activist core of 3,000 in the 1880s) were, from the assassination of the Russian Tsar and the London Congress, deeply impressed by violent acts of propaganda by the deed. The propagandists concentrated more on mobilising the *déclassé* than the proletarian. Tiring of Zola's naturalism many radical symbolist artists and poets attached themselves to anarchism because of its romantic aspect (Sonn, 1989, pp. 184-5). The proletarian was humdrum, but Ravachol, the thief, murderer, and *Attentäter* became heroically noble (Weber, 1986, p. 118). The most vocal portion of the movement was

utterly uninterested with industrial organisation, which until 1895 appeared to augur little more than reformism and delay (Fleming, 1979, p. 113).

The French government were unprepared for the savage measures which would have snuffed out the anarchist movement altogether, but they did make mass propaganda impossible (for a short while), and broke the back of the local groups which had fostered the cult of the bomb. It was a lesson well learnt by many anarchists shell-shocked from the failure of the *attentats* to achieve much more than the *lois scélérates*. That the fantastically quick amnesty given by President Faure in 1895 saw no return to the *attentats* is indicative of the veneer-like hold that they had. Anarchist activists with nowhere else to go, became interested in the "sudden" vitality of the *syndicats*.

Anarchist involvement in syndicalism was very underexposed during the early 1890s, yet many talented organisers, unimpressed with the effectiveness of small-group anarchism and the indiscriminacy of the *attentats*, followed this path. Fernand Pelloutier, at a youthful 27, acceded to the secretary-generalship of the Bourses du Travail in 1895 (Ridley, 1970, p. 65). Pouget, eventual editor of the CGT's *La Voix du Peuple*, had kept his eye on anarcho-syndicalism as editor of *Le Père Peinard* (Ridley, 1970, p. 25); Kropotkin, though never a syndicalist, studied it with interest. The appeal of anarcho-syndicalism lay in Pelloutier's encouragement of anti-possibilism, and the idea of the General Strike as a means of emancipation rather than for piecemeal reform (Jennings, 1990, p. 15).

Alongside anarcho-syndicalism there survived, if somewhat more circumspectly than before, a more traditional current. Those wary of anarcho-syndicalist mass organisation, such as André Lorulet, cultivated the idea of the *groupe d'affinité*. If the CGT was one of the heirs of

anarcho-syndicalism, then the Bonnot Gang was part of the inheritance of the affinity group.

In Spain the pattern was somewhat different. The Bakuninist collectivist FTRE was the dominant anarchist influence around the time of the original anarchist clandestine bands, the *Desheredados*. The FTRE crumbled between 1885 and 1888 - well before the first peak of the anarchist *atentados* - under the pressure of a collectivist/communist *Bruderkrieg* (Esenwein, 1989, p. 122). The rise of the anarchist communists was accompanied by the spread of the idea of propaganda by the deed. Pure anarchist cadres in *grupos de afinidad* paralleled their French counterparts in developing a cult of violence. Their recent past having been consistently more harsh compared with the French, the Spanish *grupos* were in many cases much more prepared to turn thought into deed. Acts of clandestine violence were by no means the only interest of the anarchist communists, particularly in its heartland of Andalusia. The rising at Jerez in 1892 was indicative of the maintenance of an insurrectionary tradition.

The heirs of the FTRE in 1888 were the effectively anarchist communist *Organización Anarquista de la Región Española* and the predominantly Catalonian collectivist *Pacto de Unión y Solidaridad* (the forerunners of the FAI and CNT), both of which were victims of repressions in the 1890s. Whilst the communists gravitated around anti-possibilism and propaganda by the deed, and the collectivists in fomenting industrial unrest, both began to lose out to the socialist possibilist UGT. Furthermore, the repressions from 1893 to 1897 made anarchist organisation particularly difficult, and sent many - including those opposed to the *atentados* such as Tarrida del Marmol and José Prat - into exile.

It would be fair to say that the repressions (in part caused by the *atentados*) had the effect of creating a gap into which the newest French influence of anarcho-syndicalism spread. The influence of the *attentäters* was not, however, erased. Unlike most of the rest of the Europe anarchist *atentados* ebbed and flowed into the twentieth century.

From the birth of the CNT in 1910-1911 the growth of anarcho-syndicalism was quick, if spasmodic. Owing largely to Anselmo Lorenzo (according to Bookchin, 1977, p. 160) even the anarchist communists became interested in the mass semi-conscious labour movement. Alongside anarcho-syndicalism came the *pistoleros*. *Pistolerismo* was endemic between 1919 and 1923, and only died with the advent of the Civil War. Yet in 1919 the CNT claimed around 100,000 members, much larger than the rival UGT (Brenan, 1969, p. 199; Bookchin, 1977, pp. 169, 182).

The *Líceo* theatre bomb in 1893 saw a general repression in Barcelona including the execution of five unconnected anarchist militants. It also saw the creation of special anti-anarchist laws and a police unit expressly used to harass anarchists, the *Brigada Social*. The 1896 *Corpus Christi* bomb saw a savage repression in which hundreds were tortured at the Montjuich prison. However, it would be wrong to say that the anarchist movement was treated especially harshly for every supposed anarchist outrage. Angiolillo was the only victim after he killed Cánovas; the assassination of Canalejas was followed within a year by the amnesty of the 1911 General Strike activists.

Moreover, some of the most crushing repressions had little to do with the *atentados*. The International was suppressed after the cantonalist uprisings in 1874. The 1892 Andalusian repression came after an abortive rising at Jerez. Canalejas forced the CNT underground after the 1911 General Strike. The link, then, between the *atentados* and repression was not exclusive.

The second half of the nineteenth century was a period in which juvenile anarchism studied and experimented with a number of methods of effecting change. The anarchists of this period experienced both pinnacles of optimism, plateaux of impatience, and depths of despair. The *attentats* occurred in the midst of these moods. Propaganda by the deed developed because it appeared that written propaganda was insufficiently convincing, or symbolically weak to the oppressed majority; covert methods became more attractive when popular uprisings proved too costly, or where insurrection was not even feasible.

There is no ideal type for either the *Attentäter* or the milieu in which they worked. Outbreaks of anarchist clandestine violence occurred in both the authoritarian autocracy of Russia and liberal democratic France. On the eve of their "eras of *attentats*" the German movement was small and weak, while the Spanish one large and experienced. While the evidence appears to show that overwhelming proportions of grassroots movements in most affected countries were never more than cursorily supportive of their comrade *Attentäter*, the consistent reappearance of clandestine violence in Spain implies a stronger undercurrent of support in at least one part of the movement. Perhaps the only significant common denominator is that wherever *Attentäter* were active, their effect both on anarchists and the population in general was greatly out of proportion with their actual number.

The revolutionary import of clandestine violence was negligible. Most of the anarchist *attentats* of this period are served better by such reactive words as resistance, retribution, and deterrence, than revolution or revolutionary propaganda. The reactive theme of the *attentats* did not mean that they were without value. But if some anarchist theorists observing the passage of the *attentats* may not have

disowned individual acts, practically all sought new avenues through which to pursue more positive objectives. The *attentats* illustrated the destructive capabilities of the anarchist, but not the constructive ones.

Violence, Nonviolence, and the Concept of Revolution

The identification of anarchism with social revolution is very strong. Anarchy requires, after all, a thorough-going change in the economic, social, and political arrangements of society. The act of dissolving institutionalised authority, capitalism, patriarchy, or whatever is captured in such romantic notions as the storming of the Winter Palace. This act of revolution is often one of the least significant aspects of revolution, but it remains of great symbolic importance. Partisans of nonviolence threaten this symbol. Advocates and apologists of the violence of revolution are particularly doubtful about the possibility of a successful nonviolent systemic revolution, and complain that attracting revolutionaries to this blind alley only succeeds in diluting those committed to the more promising, violent, route. Partisans of nonviolence may in turn claim the impossibility, inefficiency, immorality, and ideological inconsistency of reaching anarchy by means of violent revolution.

In the first sub-section I investigate the argument over the goals of those whose approach might well be described as philosophical anarchists, and whether it is appropriate to call their models revolutionary. Secondly I view the debate over the compatibility of nonviolence with the idea of revolution. Though many theorists associate

revolution with violence, this does not appear to be a necessary conjunction.

In the second and third sub-sections I look into the strategic paradox and attendant moral and ideological dilemmas. It is possible to propose that the use of violence (or indeed coercion) as a means, and the goal of anarchy, are entirely irreconcilable. At the same time the critic who points out deficiencies in the consistency of non-pacifist anarchist revolutionary strategy may also doubt that persuasive means are sufficient to overcome the egoistic materialism and institutionalised authority that anarchists combat. If anarchism is to be anything more than philosophical, it has to be able to argue that either rational persuasion is of itself capable of effecting societal change, or as I investigate here, that violence is morally excusable, ideologically consistent, or simply historically inevitable.

Enlightenment, Nonviolence and Revolution

The ideal of a Godwin, a Gandhi, or any of those who gravitate around the grey areas of philosophical anarchism is the institution of an enlightened anarchy without recourse to methods that contravene political or religious/moral tenets. The ideal that Godwin sought was on a par with that of Tucker, Warren, or Proudhon. Gandhi's utopia was no less far-reaching than the anarchist communism of Kropotkin or Berkman. One might note that unlike the true philosophical anarchists Gandhi was prepared to become physically involved in securing social change.

Godwin had faith in the progressive effects of experience and education upon people as rational moral agents (1985, p. 414). He envisaged that eventually people might be able to assert their full right of private judgement, unrestricted by law, yet at the same time act to the fullest utility of all (Godwin, 1985, pp. 200, 387-8, 695;

Philp, 1986, pp. 169). This was a massive step away from the pessimism of Hobbes who feared that without sovereign government, a situation where desire outstripped availability would always end in conflict: "...it is manifest that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called Warre" (1992, p. 88; see also Schultz, 1984, p. 6). Nevertheless, Godwin felt that until the necessary enlightenment was evident in the mass of the population the dissolution of government was undesirable. Until virtue supplanted self-love, a condition of anarchy would simply add the element of disharmony in human relations to that of injustice (which already existed under government; 1985, pp. 663-4). Government had a place in an unenlightened society, and it would be all to the better if politicians were active in the process of enlightenment (1985, p. 388).

Gandhi felt even more strongly that working with government in order to change it was a desirable and necessary step. While *satyagraha* was the route to national and personal *swaraj*, government was the best means of maintaining the conditions necessary for this harmonious change. The premature collapse of government meant to Gandhi nothing but a negative and fearful anarchy (1987, pp. 307; 602).

The application of Gandhi's principles would lead to massive societal rearrangement, but the process was predominantly a personal one, a gradual one (Gandhi, 1987, p. 447). For Godwin a revolution was a hiccup rather than the prime-mover (Godwin, 1985, pp. 269-70). He did not label the process of change "revolution," though Gandhi did (Gandhi, 1987, pp. 447, 507).

One of the major problems of labelling "revolution" a seamless process, which has every expectation of taking generations to complete, is that practically all change becomes revolutionary (for instance, see Edwards, 1973, p. 9). It is difficult to describe the movement from

feudalism to capitalism as a revolution, whereas most are content to regard the French Revolution as a revolution. Neumann is an exception in pointing out that hindsight may give an extended period of total social rearrangement the appearance of a revolution (1949, p. 334).

Factors missing from the Gandhian or Godwinian processes, but common to political-legal definitions of revolution, are some form of societal convulsion within a relatively short time-span. Alternatively, sociological definitions concentrate on issues such as the breakdown of authority or obedience and de-emphasise the durational and convulsive connotations (Ellwood, 1905, p. 51; Amann, 1962, pp. 38-9). Whilst this does help to avoid the confusion over the convergence of rebellion, *coup d'état*, and insurrection with revolution, it also means that any breakdown of authority, intended or not, successful or not, becomes revolutionary, thus sacrificing one confusion for another.

Going back to political-legal definitions, and leaving the point about convulsion until later, it does not seem unreasonable to argue that a process of growing rationality and rule by private judgement, taking generations to eliminate the need for government should not be furnished with the label social revolution. Social scientists concerned with a political-legal definition seem fairly agreed that duration is a factor which helps separate that which is revolution from that which is evolution (Calvert, 1970, p. 14). While Rejai is prepared to quantify his position to the extent of "perhaps over a period of two or three years to two or three decades" (1977, p. 7), most simply use the words "rapid" or "sudden" (Kamenka, 1969, p. 124; Dunn, 1974, p. 12).

It is definitionally apt to describe a process of great social rearrangement with no observable act or time-scale social "transformation" rather than social "revolution." Some anarcho-pacifists certainly do not feel comfortable with the word revolution (Tolstoy,

1960; Redpath, 1960, p. 25). Those who do apply it positively use it synonymously with certain types of change; Sampson employs it to mean personal enlightenment (1985, p. 23). Yet while most are unlikely to feel aggrieved if the effects of gradual societal change are described as "transformation" rather than "revolution" it is a different matter to try and dismiss all nonviolent anarchists from the realm of revolution.

Political-legal definitions tend to distinguish the socio-political revolution by the inclusion of a violent convulsion (Friedrich, 1969, p. 5; Huntington, 1968, p. 264; Rejai, 1977, p. 8). This inclusion is partly based on empirical review and partly on the perceived need to differentiate revolution from sweeping reforms within the constitutional framework. Conventional paradigms such as the French and Russian Revolutions are seen to have involved a violent phase and break-down in constitutional continuity. Nonviolent tactics are conceded at most a partial role in an otherwise necessarily violent revolutionary strategy (Oppenheimer, 1969, ch. 6; Childress, 1971, pp. 20-1). Nonviolence is certainly associated, both by its critics and its advocates, with reformism and resistance. The many instances of successful or partly successful nonviolent campaigns mentioned by Gene Sharp (1971, ch. 5) and Richard Gregg (1960, ch. 1) deal predominantly with resistance to alien dominion, or attempts to secure changes in government policy by conversion or coercion. Some advocates of nonviolence actually dismiss the likelihood of successful nonviolent revolution (W.R. Miller, p. 93; Walzer, 1960, p. 372).

The strategy of determinedly nonviolent "revolutionaries" need not lead to further confusion. It is not hard to see, as does Nielsen, the possibility of a continuum between reform and revolution (1979, pp. 162-3); radical reforms may have great transformational import (Gorz, 1967, pp. 6-8; Bruyn, 1979, p. 30). But the real differentiation between

reform and revolution is the ultimate reliance on illegal or non-legal methods to effect the change itself. Kamenka grudgingly admits the theoretical possibility of a violence-free revolution which nevertheless maintained other factors, chief of which is convulsion (1969, p. 124). A degree more enthusiastically, Nielsen notes that "there is no *conceptual* reason why a revolution must be violent, though there may very well be substantial empirical justification for believing that all revolutions [will be]" (1979, p. 161). However, the prevailing Marxist and anarchist attitude is that a nonviolent revolution is a *practical* impossibility:

> The element of coercion or violence is...essential to revolution, because every political system rests ultimately on the sanction of force, and force is therefore needed to overthrow it. In theory the upholders of the old system may be so demoralised, and the champions of the new one may be so confident and united, that power is transferred peacefully. In practice these conditions never exist (Close, 1985, p. 2).

Nonviolent revolutionaries firstly reject the subsidiary that force is necessary to counter force. One may also challenge the belief that if the necessary conditions for nonviolent social revolution have not existed that means they cannot exist. A "hard" nonviolent critique notes that if these conditions have not occurred in the past then neither have the conditions necessary for the anarchists' social revolution; they are contingent upon each other. A weaker form comments that one can hardly dismiss nonviolent strategy as hopeless when violent revolutions have singularly failed to take mankind remotely near socialist paradise.

The viability of nonviolent revolution tends to stand or fall on the persuasiveness of its hypothetical strategy. The dearth of past experience in the field of social revolution is hardly important if nonviolent theorists can produce a logical and complete model. George Lakey's (1973) strategy for nonviolent social revolution is possibly the most coherent to have emerged (Lakey is not an anarchist, but his model is applicable to anarchist-inspired revolution). Lakey puts forward a

strategy of progressive stages, which may run concurrently. It begins with "cultural preparation" or consciousness-raising, making people aware of the faults in society and awakening them to the possibility of change. Organisational approaches are made, with basic units being affinity groups in the community or work-place. Radical caucuses or ginger groups are created within larger, less progressive bodies, which, if they cannot be converted, can be left to create counter-institutions. Propaganda by the deed, in the shape of symbolic gestures and acts (one might think of C.N.D.'s "die-ins" in this context), is used as a further method of attracting popular support. Once one's organisational strength is assured, be it at affinity group, provincial, or national level, political or economic non-cooperation may be countenanced. Only when the mass of the population are conscious, organised, and active can the revolution, the combination of non-cooperation with intervention against the existing institutions and promotion of parallel institutions, begin.

The possibility remains that some might be prepared to use violence to attack the revolutionaries. For Lakey this is not the insuperable problem that many non-pacifist anarchists believe it to be. Given the preparedness of the revolutionaries for sacrifice, and their dogged nonviolent resistance, the defenders of privilege would soon realise their untenable position. Nonviolent revolutionaries do not necessarily suggest there will be no casualties, but rather there would be fewer aggregate casualties than if reactionaries were faced with violent revolutionaries.

Another alternative to the *essentially* violent approach of insurrectionary anarchists is anarcho-syndicalism. Although there is nothing to say violence should be entirely dissociated from anarcho-syndicalism, a number of its early European advocates were anarcho-pacifists (for example, Nieuwenhuis and de Ligt). The essence of

anarcho-syndicalism is that the state's (and capitalism's) existence is dependent on the economic cooperation of the proletariat. It is through the coordinated action of this industrial muscle, not physical attack, that anarcho-syndicalists believe the state can be effectively challenged.

Social revolution may still be revolution without the revolutionary forces necessarily using violence. Other aspects of revolution are more essential: great change; time-boundedness; dependence on extra-legal or illegal means to effect the change directly; discontinuity and/or convulsion probably involving some definable act of revolution or revolutionary moment. Violence is only a subordinate factor, dependent on the will of the reactionary and the revolutionary. Lakey and others have produced persuasive hypothetical models which assert that the determination of nonviolent progressive forces can undermine the power and authority of the state without violence. Their models share traits with the revolutionary rather than the transformational or radically reforming models because they assume a time-bounded quality and reject any role for institutional methods of change. In both Lakey's strategy and anarcho-syndicalism there is a convulsion of sorts: in the former the ultimate competition between institution and counter-institution; in the latter a definite act of revolution, the General Strike. It makes little sense to deny the possibility of nonviolent revolution. The argument is best waged over whether it appears likely or unlikely, effective or ineffective.

The Strategic Paradox and Other Moral/Ideological Dilemmas

A final area to address is the strategic paradox which is sometimes alluded to in academic surveys (Novak, 1954, p. 184; Goodwin, 1992, pp. 150-1; D. Miller, 1984, pp. 94, 123). Perhaps the most fluent

exploration of the paradox is to be found in chapter 5 of Alan Ritter's *Anarchism* (1980). Firstly, Ritter posits that the anarchist goal of "communal individuality" can only legitimately be obtained by methods which are not inimical to that goal (p. 90). Given that he finds only rational persuasion in the Godwinian mould as consistent with the mode of anarchy, he believes that this is the only legitimate tool for anarchists. Secondly, Ritter declares that rational persuasion is an insufficiently vigorous method in the face of vested interests prior to the dissolution of government, and incorrigible elements in the aftermath (pp. 96-8).

There can be few anarchists who would disagree with the proposition that rational persuasion or personal example are the most ideologically sound methods of changing behaviour and attitudes. Non-pacifist anarchists accept that methods of violence and coercion can at best eliminate opposition and change behaviour. They are most ineffective at breeding committed cooperation and the general good will that is necessary for the creation of stable anarchy. From Godwin (1985, Book VII, ch. II) to Bakunin (1980, p. 421), to Berkman (1942, p. 52), to interviewees in the present work, most anarchists of all hues have recognised that understanding and acceptance are the only means to a mature anarchy - albeit not necessarily the only path to the dissolution of institutional authority and economic subjection.

Even the champions of rational persuasion, Godwin and Proudhon, were doubtful that it could be the motive force of social transformation. Ritter finds Bakunin the natural heir to this doubt or disillusionment. He finds this arch-conspirator espousing a strategy which "often involves what is for anarchists the illegitimate use of force" (p. 103). Illegitimate because Ritter believes that if anarchists accept the validity of a strategy involving power concepts then they are

refuting their own denunciation of power and undermining the anarchist ideal. Ritter gives us the proposition that either power concepts are valid, and are valid all the time, or they are invalid, and are invalid all the time. Ritter sees Kropotkin as a theorist aware of the inconsistency of anarchism and power concepts, struggling desperately to accommodate this with the apparent impotence of rational persuasion. As far as Ritter is concerned Kropotkin failed to produce a practically and ideologically sound compromise because it is almost impossible to do so: anarchist strategy is invariably illegitimate or ineffective (p. 108).

The second clause of the strategic paradox, the ineffectuality of persuasion, is outside my remit and is not discussed here. The ineffectuality of rational persuasion in social transformation at any point in human existence may be a point of historical fact. The existence of those who are deemed philosophical anarchists indicates that there are some who doubt the practicability of their ideal. However, the interview study shows that there are others (Tom, Seamus) who cling to a strategy of pure persuasion. They believe, though it may not convince many others, that it is not impossible that persuasion and personal example might at some point prove sufficiently appealing, history notwithstanding, to convert mankind.

If the question to be investigated is that of the legitimacy of violence we might fish around for arguments other than Ritter's allegation that power concepts are inconsistent with anarchism. Anarcho-pacifism's rejection of violence derives from a number of *a priori* principles and empirical hypotheses which need to be addressed. Also there is the challenge of Kantian morality, which parallels the ideological critique provided by Ritter.

What then makes violence so unacceptable? Certainly by most moral standards the pain and damage violence causes are bad and are something

that at the very least need to be justified or excused. But the Tolstoyan insists that there are in fact no justifications or excuses for the spilling of human blood. Developing out of a religious background the Tolstoyan tradition of absolutist pacifism refers back to the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." To the absolutist pacifist this commandment is fundamental, set in stone, as it were. Theoretically, a non-religious humanist might also hold this commandment to be intuitively correct. There is little to be gained from arguing the value of this fundamental if it derives directly from a faith in a supreme being who is not to be judged by rational discussion. But while the intuitive or religious bases of absolutist pacifism might be internally secure, neither is a particularly good argument against the use of violence to those who do not share that religion or intuition. Indeed, they can be made to appear thoroughly ludicrous to the outsider.

One attempt to make the absolutist pacifist's position credible to others is the system of priority rules suggested by Whitman (1966, p. 307). An absolutist pacifist may have any number of legal obligations or religious principles which should be adhered to, but if any should come into conflict they refer to the rule: "Never do what is evil...or, if we must choose between evils, never to choose the greater." Absolutist pacifists choose as their supreme principle the refusal to kill, or to use violence.

Narveson attempts to deny the *a priori* nature of this by suggesting that a situation might arise where in order to prevent a massive quantity of killing it would be logical for the absolutist pacifist employing the priority rule to break his/her supreme principle - the classic assassinating Hitler scenario (1968, p. 149). Tom Regan adequately dispatches Narveson's argument by questioning the validity of his assumption that the absolutist pacifist believes that the use of a

lesser quantity of violence to prevent a greater quantity of violence from occurring will lead to a lesser resultant evil/wrong. If, as Regan believes is logically possible, violence/killing might be conceived by the pacifist to be "*irredeemably* evil" or wrong, then "It is a greater evil to use force than to make additional force possible by refusing to use it, which is to say, no one ought ever to use force" (1972, pp. 80-1). Regan's uncertainty over whether pacifists do hold this to be true may be quashed by this statement from anarcho-pacifist Ronald Sampson:

> ...pacifism rests on a true religious understanding of the nature of man's relation to the universe. Reverence for life does not mean killing in order to influence a subsequent series of events, which is never within the capacity of any individual to control in any event. The purpose of life is not to save good people from perishing at the hands of bad people.... The purpose of life is to exemplify goodness at the expense of badness (1985, p. 22).

That it is logically possible to hold an absolutist pacifist position does not make it particularly useful tool against those who advocate violence, and clearly do not believe it irredeemably evil. A possibly more functional position is that of the quasi-absolutist pacifist. The quasi-absolutist pacifist, whom Robert Holmes confuses with the absolutist pacifist (1971, p. 119), holds that there is never a conceivable circumstance in which killing or violence is justified. The quasi-absolutist pacifist appears to work largely on an aphoristic basis. Lund argues: "We must never be misled into believing that the end justifies the means, but realize that with evil means the best intentions will come to nothing" (1966, p. 356). The roots of other common quasi-absolutist maxims are, "violence doesn't work", "violence breeds violence", and, "violence eventually harms the perpetrator" (see for instance Huxley, 1946, p. 25). Absolutists may also argue with axioms, in order to make their stance more appealing to others. However, the two positions are not logically complimentary. If, as the absolutist holds, the use of violence is irredeemably wrong/evil it is irrelevant

whether good or bad consequences result from abjuring it (Regan, 1972, p. 86).

The quasi-absolutist's maxims are not *a priori*. As Melzer points out, objections such as the idea that violence always leads to substantive evils "require empirical investigation" (1975, p. 126). If one is to investigate the statement "violence breeds violence" seriously, one can hardly rely on unsubstantiated value judgement, or empirical hypotheses. One requires factual evidence to prove it. It seems highly unlikely that the quasi-absolutist position can stand much examination if it depends on pure aphorisms alone, for there can be little doubt that some acts of violence have brought no retaliation, or that the use of violence achieved certain goals without producing ruinous side-effects. Naturally, the failure of an empirical rule on a single occasion puts the validity of that rule into doubt.

Nevertheless, this should not indicate that those (such as Cullen, 1992b, p. 8) who maintain the disutility of violence argue from an entirely untenable position. It is the often unstated *general* truth of their maxims that is most defensible. The concern with the increasing destructiveness of war in the twentieth century made suggestions that further global conflict would be catastrophic quite reasonable after both the First and Second World Wars. It is not unreasonable to argue that in the long-run the use of revolutionary violence will lead to the maintenance of a culture of violence, or greater violence than if violence had been forsworn. If one does not know for sure (as one cannot) which circumstances will bring unfavourable results in the short or long term, it is best to avoid violence entirely. The general rule of the quasi-absolutist is a proposition that non-pacifist anarchists have to face, but they too need not produce empirical proof to refute it, just reasonably argued doubts.

A further possible configuration is strategic pacifism. Some very good examples of such reasoning may be found in Pike (1990, pp. 24-30) and Ihara (1988). In the context of anarchism the strategic pacifist suggests that violence may be acceptable in self-defence, but not on behalf of any political or social goal or, for some, may it involve premeditation (Crosswell, 1992b, p. 8; Colin, 1987, p. 9). Strategic pacifism is derivative of absolutism and/or quasi-absolutism so it need not be pursued here. At most it should be pointed out that their exemption on grounds of self-defence does not aid the case against the use of revolutionary violence, and indeed weakens it in ways to be explored later.

A more aggressive *a priori* attack on power concepts than that of the absolutist pacifists may be made by introducing the Kantian challenge of a deontological basis to morality. Kant argued that the morality of an act should be judged on its motive rather than its result. The main determinant of the morality of an act was whether it was motivated by good will. If one needed further qualification one might refer to Kant's imperatives. The Formula of the Universal Law (FUL) declares: "Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (Kant, 1959, p. 39). The Formula of the End-in-Itself (FEI) states: "Act so you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only" (Kant, 1959, p. 47). On the basis of these formulae historical-empirical data are superfluous to any moral consideration. That bad consequences might often stem from good motives (e.g. duty or obligation) is largely irrelevant. The anarchist Baldelli writes: To use men as means and to incorporate them in an organization or institution whose purposes transcend them is to turn them into bits

of machinery, to degrade them lower than the slaves of antiquity" (1971, p. 162).

Kantian morality does not have the same foundational point as that of the absolutist pacifists. The FUL could certainly justify unpremeditated self-defence in the face of unwarranted physical attack. However, the FEI makes considerations such as pro-active violence, manipulation, or coercion in the name of social revolution morally difficult to maintain. These methods aim to use those upon which they are directed as means to an end. The social revolutionary who assassinates the autocrat essential to the survival of the ruling hierarchy contravenes the FEI because the autocrat in considered purely as a means. It might appear that the FUL is also a moral tool against the anarchist use of violence to effect social change. Anarchists would certainly flinch from approving of the universal right of anyone to use violence against anyone else. However, there are ways to apply the FUL to the satisfaction of the non-pacifist anarchist. The revolutionary anarchist might easily concoct a corruption of the Golden Rule along the lines of: act unto oppressors as you would expect others to act unto you if you sought to oppress.

Finally we might return to the anarchist strategic paradox itself. Ritter and his fellow academics are not alone in suggesting the inconsistency of end and presumed means; anarchists themselves are aware and concerned. The argument is most readily made from the anarcho-pacifist tendency (Sampson, 1985, p. 23), but others whose agenda is not dominated by the issue of minimalising violence may also raise the question. Solnemann, an individualist anarchist, declares that the "standard of whether someone is really an anarchist or not lies in whether he renounces domination of others or not" (1983, p. 180).

There are at least three specific doctrinal objections that can explain the reasoning that supports the doubts of both commentators and some anarchists. The first is that anarchism's critique of the state is based on the idea that the use of power concepts by one group of people to control another group of people is unjust. The logic goes that if the use of violence or coercion is unjust when used by a tyrannical autocrat or an elected representative democrat, it is still unjust when used by anarchists. The second objection is that anarchists believe that anarchy is a desirable alternative to the state because people are capable of rational choice, and that it is just that they are allowed to use this faculty. In using power concepts in the revolutionary context the revolutionary anarchists are disallowing the free function of individual autonomy, and also indicating that they do not have faith in the ability of people to make the "right" choice.

The sum of the first two objections is that the anarchist ought to function as if "is" were "ought", otherwise they appear to indicate that they have no faith in the truth of their own ideas. If the strategists of violent revolution have arguments to counter these objections, they then have to face the third objection: if the postponement of fundamental tenets until the end of the revolution is possible, then why should anarchists be so opposed to the idea of transitory revolutionary government?

Refuting the Strategic Paradox and Moral/Ideological Dilemmas

Morally, the strategist of violent revolution must believe that the spilling of blood is not the only evil to be considered in any equation concerning the value of social change. They must be able to make a fair estimate that the balance of evils will be worse if they do not use violence, and that there is no other feasible course of action

which could produce the same result, but with fewer resultant wrongs. The non-pacifist anarchist should also be able to go some way towards relating the ideal end with less than ideal methods, especially where they might be taken to be clearly at odds with fundamental ideological tenets.

Strategically, most anarchists believe, reluctantly or otherwise, that the massive societal change they desire must be accompanied by violence and killing, that a violence-free transformation is impossible. The major reasons for this are the vested interests some have in terms of political power and economic wealth, and the tendency of institutionalised power to maintain itself. We cannot say that under all circumstances the champions of the state will fight to maintain it, or that they cannot be persuaded to give up their power and wealth voluntarily. The empirical evidence non-pacifists provide points only to the great *likelihood* that even when the mass of the population desire change, some small minority will always be militarily prepared in reaction.

Whilst the absolutist pacifist must logically rely on the *a priori* principle that violence/killing is irredeemably wrong or evil, a defence of the use of violence might begin with the idea of the absolute right to self-defence. Certain interpretations of reactive self-defence have been justified in many traditional cultures, including those with prohibitions on killing, such as Judaism. Early Christian theorists such as Augustine rejected unauthorised self- and other-defence for its unhealthy concentration on worldly things (though he defended war by just authority; Holmes, 1989, p. 120). However, this changed with such as Aquinas, who argued the morality of self-defence was based on the good intention of preservation and not the bad intention of killing (1929, q. 64, art. 7, pp. 208-10). Self-defence is considered so

instinctive that some pacifists find it necessary to excuse the possibility of nonviolent campaigners reacting to physical attack with violence (Crosswell, 1992b, p. 8).

The right to self-defence would appear to be very closely linked to the idea of the right to life: in order to preserve one's life one might need to apply the right of self-defence. Yet the problem immediately arises that if there is a natural right to life, then the self-defender may have to violate this by employing a lethal blow against an otherwise unstoppable homicidal aggressor. Jenny Teichman is rightly hesitant in accepting any compromise in the principle of the right to life (1986, pp. 81-2), but concedes that Hobbes' analysis of the situation appears the most palatable:

> ...there be some Rights, which no man can be understood by any words or other signes, to have abandoned, or transferred. As first a man cannot lay down the right of resisting them, that assault him by force, to take away his life... (Hobbes, 1992, p. 93).

Hobbes does not adequately explain why lethal self-defence is morally preferable to the right of the homicidal aggressor to life, and Teichman is at a loss to do so beyond noting its *a priori* status. Possibly its individual intuitive appeal transcends morality, for it is morally difficult to argue that aggressors forfeit their right to life (though Locke seeks to do so, by recourse to the "law of nature;" 1960, II, section 23, p. 302), or that they in turn do not have a right to self-defence against the self-defender (as Nozick, 1974, p. 100, attempts to argue).

If one considers self-defence a natural and inalienable right - something that is rationally chosen rather than unconsciously reactive - it becomes difficult to stop the tide of claims of morally justifiable or excusable acts of defence. Teichman contrasts aggressive war with individual self-defence to make us aware of the qualitative differences

between the two (1986, pp. 88-9). This does not, however, rebut the idea that there is a slippery slope from reactive self-defence down to pro-active collective defence. If it is ethical to defend oneself, it appears morally incoherent and counter-intuitive (except to the egoist) that it should be unjustifiable to defend someone incapable of defending themselves.

Thus I turn to the question of premeditation. If one knew that armed homicidal bandits were about to attack, and one agreed that one had the right to use whatever means (say, a gun) were appropriate and likely to succeed in defending oneself against them, it would seem illogical to refuse to prepare such means of resistance. Similarly, if premeditated combination with others appeared to be the only way to stop homicidal attackers it would be bizarre to disbar it. By this reasoning revolutionaries may be held morally justified in defending themselves and others against attack during the act of revolution; also of joining into collective armed defence units in advance, if there appeared no more justifiable means of forestalling attack, and if success seemed likely. The greyest area of justifiable defence is pro-active defence: where the only way one's military weakness can prevail against armed homicidal bandits is a pre-emptive attack. This is perilously close to the divide between defence against actual threat and preservation against potential threat.

A further area of contention is where self-, other-, or collective defence is applicable. The clearest context is the direct physical attack, which accords with the earlier definition of violence. To consider physical attack the sole basis of justifiable/excusable defence is to suggest that, (a) it alone can be counteracted by physical defence, and, (b) it alone *deserves* to be counteracted by physical self-defence. If we assume there is a plausible argument against (a) then (b)

only makes sense if physical attack is the worst possible thing that can happen to people.

It is manifest that those who define violence to encompass social injustice or coercion can set social injustice or coercion on a par with physical assault. Wolff justly questions whether *satyagraha* in practice should be considered automatically more ethical than some forms of physical harm. As I noted in Chapter 1 it is possible that those who take a narrower definition may share doubts about the supreme evil of violence. Gerald Runkle suggests that some degree of violence is justifiable to counter "conditions of misery, anguish, poverty, alienation, disease, insecurity, dehumanization, and slavery" (1976, p. 375). Runkle must believe that it is possible to make some rough moral correlation between violence and subjection to social injustice; that a certain degree and amount of violence can be justified because it will prevent or circumvent a greater equivalent of social injustice.

The non-pacifist revolutionary may accept that the priority rule system is good and useful, but deny that the supreme principle can be "thou shalt not kill/commit violence." For non-pacifist moral philosophers (e.g. Narveson, Regan) and anarchists this choice of supreme principle is counter-intuitive. It is possible to suggest an alternative supreme principle. Emma Goldman, with an eye on propaganda rather than theory, declared:

> Anarchism, more than any other social theory, values human life above all things.... That however, nowise indicates that Anarchism teaches submission. How can it, when it knows that all suffering, all misery, all ills, result from the evil of submission? I would say that resistance to tyranny is man's highest ideal (1969, p. 107).

If one has an alternative highest principle, as Goldman appears to have, then an appeal to avoid violence because it is bad may fall on deaf

ears. Violence may be bad, but something else may be qualitatively worse, and if so, then Goldman is prepared to choose the lesser evil.

The argument of the alternative supreme principle is only an argument against absolutist pacifism, which Regan contends can all to easily be made to appear counter-intuitive (1972, p. 84). It is also doubtful whether Goldman's "highest ideal" would be defended by her to the extinction of the world. The reason why, after all, Narveson believes that the majority finds pacifism "bizarre and faintly ludicrous" is because of the countless scenarios where a small deployment of violence would in all probability prevent a vastly bigger one. One way of making the *a priori* system more palatable is to opt for a fluid priority rule system - that is, one without a supreme principle.

Alternatively, one might reject a system of rules for the single utilitarian rule that an action is right if, and only if, it promotes the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people. Under this rule committing violence is just one factor in any moral equation. If one can make a rough calculation of the positive and negative points concerning the use of violent revolution one may find that the sum is less than the equivalent injustice if revolution had not taken place (assuming that there was no less painful means of effecting that change). This is not an easy calculation to make. There are no golden rules as to how many degrees of pain relieved for how many people are equivalent to a single killing. One must certainly be able to say that the relief from misery, and the benefits of moral autonomy of the vast majority, will far outweigh the pains of the obdurate ruling minority. Even if one accepts such a calculation as the basis of a moral decision, one may fall prey to the logical pacifist doubt that one can never predict for sure the outcome of one's actions, and therefore the calculation becomes invalid. The utilitarian can only appeal to probability and historical evidence.

In any case the Kantian FEI is rejected for the teleological idea that the end may justify the means. Runkle believes mankind find the idea of doing something unpleasant in order to get something pleasant so intuitive that "we assume the soundness of this maxim in every waking hour of our lives" (1976 , p. 373). Some anarchists do argue from the maxim that the end justifies the means (JS, 1992, p. 8), though utilitarianism is rarely associated with anarchism. The difficulty in relating the two sets of ideas is found in the possibility of the felicific calculus interfering with anarchist doctrinal tenets, though if it was firmly believed that the greatest happiness could always be found by dissolving government there might be real grounds for convergence.

The retort to the quasi-pacifist who argues that "violence does not work" or "violence breeds violence" could be the equally hypothetical "violence does work," and "violence does not necessarily breed violence." One need not necessarily accept the idea that pacifist maxims tend towards general truth over time. That violence has occurred in various places at various time through history does not indicate it has virus-like properties. A violent episode between peoples has not always been followed by further violent episodes. Non-pacifist anarchists have their own store of aphorisms, the most appropriate of which are: the ruling class will not give up without a fight; and, social injustice breeds violence. This has empirical evidence behind it as well as some reasoned argument. However, it, like the pacifist maxims, is not empirically absolute.

For every Gene Sharp arguing the possibilities of nonviolence there is a Narveson (1965) or Runkle (1976) arguing the probabilities of violence. If the anarcho-pacifists point out that violent revolutions have not led to the diminution of state power and rigid societal

hierarchy, non-pacifist anarchists may note the coincidence of potentially socially revolutionary situations with popular violence. Despite the efforts of such as Sharp and Gregg, the non-pacifists would appear to have the empirical edge as far as it goes. The problem is that empirical evidence does not go far enough to prove particularly useful. There has not been anything approaching a successful anarchist-influenced revolution. We cannot know that a uniquely extraordinary thing can be created from methods that sometimes achieves ordinary things. In a fair debate neither side may produce conclusive evidence that the other is wrong. Each individual is left to decide for themselves which is empirically most persuasive.

If anarchists find they intuitively lean toward a fluid moral priority rule system tempered by social hedonism, and are persuaded that violence appears hypothetically an empirical necessity, and/or capable of producing the dissolution of the state, then they must finally ask whether violence is ideologically consistent with anarchism. The first clause of the strategic paradox is that violence, coercion, or manipulation, are inconsistent with anarchism.

Purists such as Giovanni Baldelli may concur that means and ends are ethically indistinct and yet make no judgement over the consistency of violence or coercion in a revolutionary context (1971, p. 162). He does this by asserting that forces motivated by desperation may be unethical, but are also instinctive and unstoppable:

> Antipower is the motive force of genuine revolutions. Being a fruit of desperation it dissipates as soon as hope returns and, being unethical, it becomes power as soon as it is triumphant. Yet, being different to power in origin and motivation, it is not inconceivable that it could be so disciplined as to defeat power in behalf of authority [anarchy] without itself becoming power (1971, pp. 169-70).

While Baldelli's argument may be attractive, one must note that he appears to say that revolutionaries are at one moment motivated by primordial urges and the next by rational judgement.

To be doctrinally secure non-pacifist anarchists must be able to hold that violence is not inconsistent with anarchism. To go back to the doctrinal objections: they have to argue that it is not unjust to use force on the protectors of the state during the social revolution; they must believe that it is not unjust that the individual autonomy of the defenders of the state be abrogated. The early Christian theologian Augustine of Hippo made the case for the just use of violence, in apparent sharp contrast to the non-resistant teachings of Christ. Thomas Aquinas clarified and widened the conditions for the just use of violence by a good Christian. Both noted the serious nature of the rules concerning the contravention of the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." Other sources make out the secular case for the existence of special conditions in which violence is justified. Arneson notes:

> Those who eschew all violence as a tool of the movement fail to discriminate adequately between violence harnessed to a mass movement against oppression and violence employed by those who benefit from the oppression.... Nobody in his right mind wants peace at *any* cost (1971, p. 157).

Violence is not taken to be essentially good or essentially bad by Arneson. It is taken as a morally neutral tool, the use of which normally entails either immoral motives or intention, or produces unpleasant results, but which may be justified under certain circumstances.

Anarchists might use this argument to justify the use of violent self-defence against homicidal maniacs in anarchic society (for crazed murderers may exist even in a stable anarchy). The argument is also used, along with less helpful ones, to justify the promotion of violent revolution. The class struggle school of anarchism tends to have little

concern for those who they believe have overstepped the boundaries of individual autonomy by disallowing the workers theirs. For Stuart Christie and Albert Meltzer to suggest that the "use of force is inconsistent with freedom" is not entirely consistent with their strategic theory. They must qualify this by saying that the motive and intent behind the use of force is the determining factor:

> Resistance to force...is the first essential to achieve freedom, even if one has to employ violence to do so. The violence that is practised by the State is the antithesis of freedom, because it is the means by which rule is maintained. If one can only resist the imposition of the State's commands by violence, then such violence must be a prerequisite of freedom (1974, p. 134).

From this it is very clear that they believe that violence used for a just purpose is very different from violence used for an unjust purpose; coercion used to constrain the freedom of the oppressed is inconsistent with anarchism, coercion used to counteract that constraint (albeit at the expense of the oppressors) is consistent.

Anarchists who accept the use of violence and seek ideological consistency cannot accept the first two doctrinal objections set at the end of the last section. They must say that the use of violence and other power concepts are unjust where they are used with the intention of initiating or maintaining institutionalised authority and hierarchic power structures, but are justifiable/excusable (rather than "just") where the intention is their dissolution and there are no more efficient means. Similarly, the autonomy of individuals is desirable except where that free function is used to abridge the individual autonomy of others and where no persuasive means succeed in altering such irresponsibility. Anarchism, by these tokens, is for responsibly autonomous liberty, not freedom for egoistic liberties. These two doctrinal tenets, if they are to be held, may be held prior to, during, and after the dissolution of the state.

In maintaining these two doctrinal tenets one appears to come into conflict with the third doctrinal objection - that if there are qualifications to the ideological prohibitions on the use of power concepts, then why not on the prohibition on revolutionary provisional government. Anarchists who come to accept the idea of the value of revolutionary government (for instance the A.W.G.) have been looked on as renegades by the movement as a whole. One might accept the axiomatic claim that institutional arrangements tend to self-preservation (where individual use of violence does not), but this is not the heart of the non-pacifist case. The solution to this third objection is to be found within the nature of the state and its associated concepts. Power concepts are seen by non-pacifist anarchists to be functions, possibly bad but not essentially so. The institutionalisation of power concepts is seen as a qualitatively different thing. A revolutionary hierarchy, no matter how well intentioned, must suffer the same objections that anarchists have for any hierarchic arrangement.

The message from this, as from Baldelli, is that any anarchist prepared to use violence or coercion in pursuit of anarchy is on a knife-edge. It is possible to use these power concepts as part of a struggle to dissolve the state, but reliance upon them or inattentiveness may at any time throw the user into the role of the reactionary or the proto-statist. Even if the use of violence is necessary, justifiable, and consistent, it is still dangerous.

The aim of this section was twofold. The first aim was to determine the relationship of persuasive and nonviolent anarchist strategies of change to the concept of social revolution. To do so it was necessary to isolate the relevant strategies. I found that a

gradualist strategy whose key component was persuasion and personal example was better suited to the concept of transformation than revolution. On the other hand, nonviolent strategies which claim both rapidity of execution and non-constitutionality can quite justifiably be seen as having revolutionary import.

The second intention of the section was to investigate the validity of revolutionary strategies. A number of claims are made to the effect that violent revolution (or indeed coercive/manipulative nonviolent revolution) is unconscionable for anarchists. Pacifists provide a battery of arguments for why violence is morally wrong in all (or practically all) circumstances. However, their arguments are conspicuously flawed. Absolutist pacifism is dependent on acceptance of a principle that few hold to be paramount; quasi-absolutism is empirically refutable. Given the prevailing approval of violent sanctions such faults are enough to maintain the minority status of the pacifist outlook.

A further attack on revolutionary strategy emanates from Kantian deontological ethics. Whilst the FEI might be laudable in stateless society anarchists intent on revolution may defer to a teleological principle: that the end justifies the means. This is not an entirely satisfactory retort. Any prior calculation as to whether the result of social revolution will actually justify massive dislocation and/or casualties is hardly be more than sheer speculation. Nevertheless, a consequentialist ethic is a reasonably secure place from which to base revolutionary strategy.

The most critical argument facing anarchists intent on revolution is that which brings into question the ideological consistency of anarchism with the use of power concepts. This forms the basis of the strategic paradox which Ritter and others believe confers anarchism to

impotence. In order to refute such allegations anarchists cannot claim both that they reject power concepts absolutely and that they accept a strategy of violent (or coercive) revolution. They must maintain that there is a particular context where the use of power concepts is justifiable. That circumstance is where violence (or coercion) is acceptable for the dissolution of institutionalised power and institutionalised injustice, if no less costly means are available. In pursuing a strategy of revolution they are drawing a distinction between individual use of power and institutionalised power. The first is justifiable in a special circumstance; the second is unjustifiable in all circumstances. As Baldelli indicates, this is a consistent, if precarious, line.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

The prompt for this work was the belief that the popular representation of the anarchist as a scheming terrorist was a sweeping distortion, and that academics had done little to contradict this. While counterbalancing prevailing media norms was hardly a realistic goal, it was hoped that this study could add weight to the treatment of the anarchist as a subject worthy of serious political interest. In order to do this it appeared necessary to address both empirical distortions of the relationship of anarchists with violence, and issues of theoretical contradiction. The former required techniques uncommon in this context. The latter required both a critical faculty and an empathy for anarchism (empathy is for some academic commentators, however, a euphemism for condescension). This combination, in the desirable proportions, allows anarchism a fair representation without ignoring, or failing to untangle, apparent discrepancies.

The political (as opposed to purely historical) aspect of the relationship between anarchism and violence has not entirely avoided the attention of academics. As we have seen, some academic works have approached the classical theorists' views on violence with varying degrees of fair but critical analysis (Ritter, 1980; Crowder, 1991). For an illustration of a theoretical overview that is both clumsy and dismissive one might look at Friedrich (1972). For Friedrich the anarchists "exaggerate the goodnaturedness of man" and are determined in the "simplistic notion that all ills are 'caused' by the state" (p. 168). Anarchists, however, have several different conceptions of human nature, and few believe that people are innately good. Nor do they necessarily believe that the state is the source of all evils. If that was the case the interview study in the present work would not have

indicated the grave doubts that many respondents had that stable anarchy would take less than a couple of generations to develop; nor would there be the concern over sexism, animal rights, and environmentalism as issues in their own right. On violence Friedrich totally misrepresents Bakunin's stance, in a couple of sentences, as akin to a fiendish bloodlust (1972, p. 175). The present study contends that Bakunin was keenly concerned by the threat and cost of violence as well as being one of its most renowned advocates.

Anarchism and individual terror is cautiously and objectively considered by Novak (1954). He is conscious of the limited (i.e., not revolutionary) goals to which anarchists have applied clandestine violence (p. 177). Additionally, his study does not dismiss the anarchist recourse to clandestine violence without weighing-up the moral and practical costs and benefits. However, he fails to grasp the full potential of anarchist morality. He assumes that anarchists believe that life is sacred and that anarchists reject "a teleological view of life" (p. 180). By this token, had the anarchist *Attentäter* been true to themselves, there would have been no need for a study on anarchism and individual terror. Such a patent contradiction is not *necessarily* due to the moral confusion of the *Attentäter*, as Novak suspects. The present study indicates that the sanctity of life is a tenet appropriate only for absolutist pacifists.

Novak also believes that the moral justification of violence is dependent on whether it is the "only possible means" to achieve a particular aim (though this question would not be pertinent for anarchists if they were all deontologists). Many anarchists would argue that violence does not deserve the label of supreme evil that Novak accords it: the present study shows that it is morally feasible for

anarchists to argue that a moderate degree of violence is better than a immense amount of injustice.

The faults of the above studies' analyses may reflect the agenda of their authors, or carelessness. These studies were, in any case, bound to have limited value for those seeking to grasp the possible configurations of the relationship between violence and anarchism because of their lack of comprehensiveness. Two studies which empathetically address the misrepresentation of anarchism and violence in a wider context are McKeown (1991) and James (1985). While both studies offer valuable insights into possible configurations on theoretical and historical levels, neither derives sufficient data from contemporary reference to tell us much about the *existing* relationship between anarchists and violence. Only Schultz's (1984) comparative study of "evolutionary" and "revolutionary" anarchisms goes anywhere near to attempting this.

The primary goal of this research was to draw together disparate elements of anarchism, from a variety of perspectives, both modern and historical, in order to provide a comprehensive and relevant picture of the relationship between anarchism and violence. The attainment of comprehensiveness was seen to require not only reference to past and present, but also a reflection of the division of labour in the anarchist movement (which is not necessarily mutually excluding) between theory, propagandism, and activism. It was clear that such a reflection required an unconventional method.

The first chapter helped contextualise the research. Anarchism was approached as an ideology maintaining a few fundamental tenets from which there was a great divergence of opinion. The chief principles of anarchism were seen to be the critique of institutionalised power and authority, the desire for a society based on some balance of individual

autonomy and voluntary cooperation, and the belief that institutional power could not be used to dissolve itself. Divergence of opinion might begin with the anarchist view of human nature, which was contended to be egoistic, social, or dependent on external stimuli. The desirable form of social and economic organisation were seen to be contentious issues, with some anarchists leaning toward liberal-egoistic individualism, and others toward communalism and communism. The method by which anarchists seek to accomplish social change is an issue creating a similar degree of dissonance within anarchist circles - indeed may be considered by anarcho-pacifists, in particular, to be of greater importance or immediacy. In addition, the apparent contradictions concerning this issue do not go unnoticed by unsympathetic critics.

In order to progress toward discussing this question it was necessary to make sense of the terms violence, nonviolence, and pacifism. Violence, in particular, was found to be a term which has to be used very carefully because of the tendency of social scientists to mould it to fulfil their own agendas, rendering it completely alien to everyday usage. In carefully sifting through the three main schools of thought on the meaning of violence a definition which was both helpful to the study and close to popular usage was established.

Given the uncustomary decision to use interview data in a study dealing with political theory Chapter 2 is primarily an attempt to express the seriousness with which the researcher has been concerned with the validity of data obtained from interviews. On reflection, it is felt that the comprehensive depiction given is of sufficient competence to act as a model methodology for any further research into fringe political subculture involving qualitative interviewing.

The third and fourth chapters cover an area rarely approached by academics into any political subculture, let alone anarchism, probably

the least seriously studied major ideology. These chapters, then, give to anarchist activists and propagandists something that academics have never been prepared to allow them before: their own voice. The study of activists and propagandists reveals a quite different picture of anarchists than that commonly held. Conclusions that may be wrought from such an overview are inevitably subject to vigorous minority dissent. Nevertheless generalised answers to the questions asked in Chapter 1 are available from the coalescence of the evidence from the propagandist and the activist.

A charge often levelled at anarchists is that they fail to be realistic. If to be realistic is to disbelieve that revolution is just around the corner then the anarchists of today are more or less realists. While it is true that many of the theorists in the nineteenth century believed that total social rearrangement was a credible medium-term goal, the (English-speaking) anarchists of the 1980s and 1990s have maintained few such illusions.

Contemporary anarchists are not struggling for their ideal so much as fighting for a tangible political presence. This is reflected in the chief goal among anarchists: the creation, or resurrection, of a credible anarchist movement. Even the creation of a credible movement is seen as a long-term prospect. Hence most anarchists have concentrated on propagandism, and/or become involved in wider social issues, such as environmentalism. The most recent (1980s) swell of enthusiasm, stemming largely from the interest generated by the punk subculture, has partially receded over a decade featuring heavy anarchist involvement in the British miners' strike and anti-poll tax campaign, the blooming of the autonomist squatters movement in northern continental Europe, and the revival of anarchism in Eastern Europe. While English-speaking and European anarchists have contributed a great deal to popular movements

challenging policies of governments and business in recent years, the condition of their own movement remains one of decrepitude.

As so few of the respondents and so little of the recent literature regard revolution as a subject of urgent concern, it is not altogether surprising that attitudes on the form of revolution are vague. Non-pacifist anarchists can envisage a number of scenarios which precipitate revolution within the foreseeable future, but these do not begin with anarchists as the motive force. Some feel they could take advantage of a global system subject to economic slump, ecological crisis, or nuclear war. In speculation upon such crises the emphasis is put very firmly on ensuring the existence of an anarchist movement capable (propagandistically or physically) of reacting to discontent and disorder rather than calculating on pro-active revolutionary strategy.

The contemporary sources indicate that non-pacifist anarchists accept the inevitability of violence in the social revolution, but that the essence of that violence is defence. That latter-day anarchists reject any suggestion of glorifying violence was made crystal clear. There is no room for the concept of a purifying flame destroying all traces of the corrupt old society, nor any lust for punishing former oppressors. The urge to destroy is thoroughly overwhelmed by the creative urge.

Defensive violence is seen primarily, but not exclusively, as a reactive tactic. The scenario most envisage is that of violent state intervention against those engaged in social revolution. Pro-active defence does, however, receive a certain degree of approval; the value of pre-emptive attack against a stronger adversary cannot be dismissed by some. The classic revolutionary insurrection is not, however, received well.

Social revolution is such an abstract concept to contemporary

anarchists that the issue of violence in the revolution engenders little enthusiasm. Much greater animation is found over the issue of pre-revolutionary violence. The concept of defence remains the primary justification of pre-revolutionary violence. Again it is stretched by many to cover the idea of defence of the people, the oppressed, or a particular class. While the benefits of anarchy appear indefinitely out of reach, anarchists are keen to support popular struggles. In becoming involved with the day-to-day battles of the people it might be argued that anarchists lay themselves open to the charge of seeking reform rather than revolution. For instance, given that economic slump and general immiseration is considered one possible route to social revolution, in supporting pay/conditions related strikes they appear to be forestalling revolution. However, anarchists see the preparedness to confront state and business policy at every opportunity (but most keenly when the population as a whole feel an injustice is being done to them) is not seeking reform so much as making a statement of preparedness to resist. Anarchists *may* be cheered by any reforms that arise from an act of resistance, but they are, or should be, pleased more by the idea of a community acting in concert, and that some lessons might have been learnt from this. The creative urge itself is subordinated to a mood of resistance.

The liaison that some anarchists had with clandestine violence in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could be seen as a stage in the anarchist exploration of avenues of change. If so, it proved a dead-end. Nevertheless, clandestine violence remains a contentious issue. Indiscriminate clandestine violence is rejected, but this rejection is often conditional, as if to say that any outrage performed by a self-styled anarchist could never compete with the crimes performed by the state.

One fraction reject the use of discriminate clandestine violence because they believe that attacking individuals is mistaking the nature of power and hierarchy. Another fraction supports the idea of discriminate *attentats*, not as a revolutionary tactic, but for reasons of retribution or deterrence. The appeal of primitive justice has little to do with the ideology of anarchism and a great deal to do with pessimism regarding revolution. It should also be noted that contemporary anarchists tend to defend the recourse to clandestine violence rather than actually advocate it. Today's anarchism has fewer concrete reasons to be associated with terrorism than does Marxism, the ideology to which a far greater number of late-twentieth century terror groups have claimed adherence.

A division from the mainstream which cannot be ignored is anarcho-pacifism. The crux of anarcho-pacifist credo is the rejection of the recourse to violence in achieving political goals. Beyond this it becomes difficult to typify. Anarcho-pacifists may believe that violence is supremely wrong, that it is completely ineffective, or that it is doctrinally inconsistent; they may or may not accept coercion as a justifiable by-product of nonviolent direct action; they may or may not reject any form of action beside personal example or persuasion. With a number of exceptions (for instance, some philosophical anarchists), the anarcho-pacifists derive their anarchism from their pacifism, and this in turn is derived from religious/humanist impulses. Their greater affinity with pacifists than non-pacifist anarchists is evident.

That the anarcho-pacifist arguments are extremely fractured does not mean that they can be dismissed by the non-pacifists. Many of the non-pacifists find addressing the morality and ideological consistency so challenging that they do not bother or make do with platitudes. Criticising anarcho-pacifism and nonviolence is no substitute for a

strong defence of the recourse to violence. The arguments for the moral justifiability of violence hold good for anarchists as they do for liberals, socialists, or whoever. The most crucial question, and one barely touched by the non-pacifist respondents or propagandist literature, is the doctrinal consistency of violence with anarchism. If violence is found to be inconsistent with anarchism then, as philosophical anarchists might say, anarchy brought about by violent revolution will fail from its inner contradictions. The solutions to this dilemma are available, but most grassroots anarchists do not appear to consider it important enough to work for them.

It is perhaps interesting to note that the flow of evidence in Chapters 3 and 4 differs substantially from conclusions reached by the only other comparable academic study which both addresses anarchist concerns over issues of violence, nonviolence, and social change, and maintains a contemporary reference (Schultz, 1984). Schultz seeks to draw a line between "revolutionary" and "evolutionary" anarchists which does not accord with the picture I draw. Schultz's "revolutionary" anarchists thrived between the mid-nineteenth century and the end of the Spanish Civil War; they criticised the system from an economic perspective; they sought support from the proletariat (this is a questionable point given that the anarchists of these times also appealed to peasants, artisans, and *déclassés*); and they desired violent revolution. Schultz's "evolutionary" anarchists are the modern incarnation of anarchism: they are products of the 1960s, ignorant of the old theorists, and anarchists by default (he declares them "*de facto*" anarchists); they have emerged from the middle class to combat the elite; they have no trust in the industrial proletariat as agents of change as they have a stake in the global hierarchy; and they seek personal change through education and direct action, not revolution

(1984, pp. 48-56). Yet the competition between idealism/materialism, lifestylism/workerism, and nonviolence/violence has existed from anarchism's earliest days. Nor has the competition been won for the evolutionists, indeed by my reckoning they are not even close to winning majority status.

If Schultz's "evolutionary" anarchists (who approximate my lifestylists, green anarchists, and anarcho-pacifists) dominated in the 1960s anarchist swell as he claims they did, this is certainly not the case in the 1980s and 1990s. The non-pacifist anarchists who prevail today accord much more with Schultz's superseded "revolutionary" anarchists. This study contradicts Schultz largely because he relies on the evidence of (who he takes to be) the leading theorists of the post-war anarchist movement, such as Herbert Read, George Woodcock, Murray Bookchin, and Paul Goodman. Above all other prescriptive socio-political doctrines, anarchism demands attention not only to abstract theorists but also the grassroots. The latest generation of anarchist activists have, to a greater or lesser degree, taken on board issues concerning the environment and the co-option of the developed world's working class. This does not, however, preclude the majority from remaining convinced of the need to uphold the recourse to violence in both indicating resistance and effecting social change. This divergence between theorists and grassroots is of crucial significance to a comprehensive and realistic modern view of anarchism and violence, and could only be discovered by referring to grassroots anarchists, as the present study has attempted.

Chapter 5 takes a more conventional look at theoretical angles on anarchism and violence. The classical anarchist theorists' meditations on the ethics of violence are generally deficient, but this is mitigated to a great degree by their conception of the process of change. The

classical theorists were working under the misapprehension either that social transformation was a pre-determined social process (in which case moralising was inappropriate) or that social revolution was just around the corner, hence moral judgements were to be made with that in mind.

The era of *attentats* could be seen as the ultimate expression of the failure of the anarchist theorists to address violence as a critical ethical issue. However, this would be crediting the grand theorists with more influence than they actually possessed. The anarchist bombings and killings occurred as a result of the collision of a clutch of events and processes - many of which derived from outside the anarchist sphere - and maintained by a momentum which might be referred to as *Zeitgeist*. Of course, had the classical theorists all come out in favour of pacifism, then the *attentats* might not have occurred, but as the present study indicates, one cannot assume that grassroots anarchists are in thrall to theorists. Kropotkin, the finest anarchist theorist of the time, was an irrelevancy to those infuriated by repression or frustrated by their own apparent impotence. The unease of the theorists and the bulk of the national movements toward the *attentats* counted for little until repression crushed the movements as a whole, or the technique was deemed a failure by those previously inclined to favour it. Lessons learnt from the era of *attentats* have been passed down to later generations of non-pacifist anarchists such that there is no inclination to repeat the experiment. This is due at least as much to the *attentats*' overall tactical failure as to ethical and ideological disquietude.

The ethical dimension of violence is one which is, on the whole, insufficiently addressed by non-pacifist anarchists. It may be because they are unsure of the validity of their own arguments, or because they believe watertight logic is of secondary importance to the promotion of action and change. However, consistency, if it is immaterial to some

activists, is not to commentators. If anarchism is to be taken seriously beyond those already converted, and not as a threat but an option, then the theorists of anarchism need to consider the study of such apparently unessential topics with greater zeal. The potential value of this study to anarchists themselves is the stimulation of this, rather than any conclusions by the author.

Though the *a priori* moral arguments of the anarcho-pacifists require a mind-set which would be alien to most, their empirical hypotheses are arguably as strong as those of the non-pacifists. The central strength of the anarcho-pacifist stance is its ideological consistency. The academics' formulation, the strategic paradox, depends on the ideological inconsistency of violence with anarchism. However, the present study finds that violence, along with other power concepts (ones which nonviolence may also be associated with), may be consistent with anarchism, and that it is only to accumulated power that they are irreconcilable. Consistency demands that all anarchists *aspire* to the complete abandonment of violence and power concepts as they aspire to anarchism. However, it does not demand the immediate renunciation of power concepts - like it does not demand anarchist lifestylism - so much as remaining meticulously sensitive to any accumulation.

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Activist Respondents

Alan, 19/6/92, Direct Action Movement (D.A.M.)

Alex, 26/11/92, Socialism From Below, ex-Anarchist Workers Group

Albert, 12/5/92, D.A.M., ex-*Black Flag*

Biff, 23/1/92

Brendan, 28/12/91

Eric, 27/10/92

Harvey, 23/1/92

Ian, 14/9/92

Jim, 23/1/92

John, 6/3/93, ex-Federation of Anarcho-Pacifists (F.A.P.)

Kevin, 17/10/92, Anarchist Communist Federation

Neil, 4/1/92

Phil, 20/6/92, *Green Anarchist*

Rob, 9/10/92, Class War Federation

Seamus, 20/1/93, ex-F.A.P.

Stan, 9/3/93

Tom, 13/11/92

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